

NOV 12 1928
It Seems to Heywood Broun

The Nation

Vol. CXXVII, No. 3306

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Wednesday, November 14, 1928



Herbert Hoover

Hoover Wins

an Editorial

Wall Street's Speculative Optimism

by Merryle Stanley Rukeyser

H. L. Mencken on *Hunger Fighters*—Albert Rhys Williams on *The Real Situation in Russia*—The Sacco-Vanzetti Play reviewed by Joseph Wood Krutch

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The New Americans

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Charlestown, Jan. 10, 1921

DEAR ALFONSINA:

... I heartily laughed to hear that the finger-nails of the little cat have scratched the Zora's nose, and I continue to laugh every time I think about it. Surely it is a good lesson not only for Zora and other child, but for mankind. The little cat knows very well that it has sharp nails, and that when a little girl molests it, it is enough to scratch a little her nose for be let free. People too has sharp finger-nails, and the noses of tyrants and oppressors is make of flesh too, but it look as tho the people ignored this notion. Oh how much less sorrow and misery would be among the mortals if they know just what a little cat knows. . .

Kisses to the children, best regards to Vincenzo and all those who love me.

Bartolo

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DAVID BOEHM, ADVERTISING MANAGER

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FOR HERBERT HOOVER we have no warmer wish than that his administration may be worthy of the unprecedented and epochal landslide which has put him into office. No doubt here as to what the American people wanted and no room for anything else than a cheerful, good-natured acceptance of the result in the familiar American spirit of clearing the decks for the victor. Anybody who received such a popular vote ought to feel humble and deeply stirred to give the country the very best that is in him. If Mr. Hoover does that, if we are to have in the White House the Hoover of those earlier days before he entered the political arena and threw overboard all his Wilsonian ideals, he may win for himself the regard, the affection, and the gratitude of the great mass of the American people who were thrilled by the personality of his Democratic rival even when they could not vote for him. There are friends of Mr. Hoover in large number who believe that he will confound the liberal opposition to him by giving us a noble-spirited, progressive administration. If that should prove to be the case no one would rejoice more than the editors of *The Nation*, who have been among his severest critics. To have broken the solid South at last is in itself a wonderful achievement; to have carried, as at this writing (the morning after the election) seems probable, no fewer than four of the Southern States, is epoch-making, even though it is not a personal victory for Mr. Hoover.

For it opens the way to that needed political realignment for which we have so long called, and it ends the absurd bugaboo of Negro domination if a single State in Dixie should go Republican. No man has entered the White House freer than Herbert Hoover. Disliked by most of the politicians, he has been chosen largely by the anti-Catholics and the Drys, but to no one does he apparently owe any personal debts. He is, therefore, in the best possible position to show the country what manner of man the real Hoover is and how great the things an enlightened engineer can achieve in the White House. While we cannot abate one jot of our opposition to the principles for which he and his party stand, we naturally and earnestly hope for the prosperity, peace, and progress of the country under Mr. Hoover's guidance.

THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY is smashed—of that there is no doubt. It chose to run a Wet and Catholic and it has paid the price. As things look today, no living man above thirty years need expect to see a Catholic nominated again for the highest office in the land. Moreover, the completeness of Governor Smith's defeat makes impossible his renomination four years hence, as might have been the case had the election been close. If, as now appears, to our great satisfaction, Franklin D. Roosevelt has been chosen Governor of New York, there has risen another star upon the political horizon in Governor Smith's own State to play a great part in the complete party reorganization which must come unless it is simply to fade out. Of that we shall have much to say in the future. Today we would only add our tribute to the extraordinary campaign made by Governor Smith. Single-handed he waged his fight against the forces most hostile to our American democracy. Privilege and bigotry and religious intolerance he assailed with frankness and superb courage. On the merits of the debate he should have won. But the American people decided not on arguments, but largely upon feelings, passions, and prejudices. No man who had to carry the triple burden of his religion, his "wetness," and his affiliation with Tammany Hall could have waged a better campaign than the Governor of New York. He ends the battle having impressed his personality upon the whole country and having won the lasting affection of multitudes. Let no one deny to him, or to Norman Thomas, the praise they deserve.

THERE IS CONSOLATION in the results of the voting for United States Senators. Throughout the campaign *The Nation* has emphasized the importance of sending back to Washington the members of the progressive bloc who in recent years have done so much to hold in check the powers that are seeking to overwhelm popular rights in this country. We rejoice, therefore, in the reelection of La Follette from Wisconsin, Shipstead from Minnesota, Frazier from North Dakota, and Howell from Nebraska. It is gratifying, too, that California has returned Johnson, Massachusetts has reelected Walsh, and Tennessee has rewarded McKellar with another term. On the morning after election the fate of Wheeler in Montana, Dill in Washington, and Neely in West Virginia was still in doubt.

TEN YEARS SINCE THE ARMISTICE! Ten years of disillusionment since the wild jubilation of that November day in 1918 when the world faced the future with a deep resolve that such a war should not come again. Looking back upon those years it seems incredible that people could settle into the old ruts, reabsorb the old prejudices, and forget the lessons of that worst conflict in history. But that is precisely what they have done. The Allied Powers are spending more money for "defense" than they did before the war, and their weapons of destruction are infinitely more deadly than they were in 1918. The governments of the older Powers are using military forces to capture economic empires as persistently as they ever did. Only in the defeated and outcast nations have the lessons of the war been taken seriously. What a sardonic fate for the ideals of Woodrow Wilson that they should find root only in the nations which he denounced! Germany, ten years after the armistice, is working valiantly for peace against the militarism of the Allies, and Russia has become the foremost champion of subject peoples. In our own country the most hopeful sign of a movement toward peace is the great increase of interest in foreign affairs. While most of our people are still drunk with the old patriotism, organizations like the Foreign Policy Association—now celebrating its tenth anniversary—have greatly increased their scope and influence. An informed public opinion favorable to open diplomacy may in time realize the hope of the first Armistice Day.

IN THE ANCIENT CITY of Kyoto during the week ending on November 16 Japan's twenty-seven-year-old Emperor, Hirohito, will complete the elaborate six-day ceremonial which marks his ascension to the throne. He is the first modern emperor of the island kingdom, the first to emerge from the impenetrable seclusion which has surrounded every Japanese emperor for many centuries. Japan has considered seclusion so sacred that, although the new Emperor's father, Yoshihito, was insane for many years, not a newspaper dared to mention the fact. The new Emperor plays tennis, rides horseback, and experiments in his own biological laboratory. In 1921 he broke all Japanese precedents by traveling for two months in Europe, where he was much impressed by the relative democracy of Western princes and by the parliamentary system. He comes to the throne of Japan at a time of grave economic depression and widespread discontent. His Government's policy on the Asiatic continent has evoked the bitter opposition of China and Russia; his prestige is being used by the Japanese upper classes to suppress honest revolutionary thinking. The overthrow of hereditary monarchies in China and Russia has had its inevitable effect upon the younger generation in Japan. Unless Hirohito's advisers show great astuteness in adapting the powers of the Emperor to the demand for democratic government, it may well be that Japan's first modern Emperor will also be her last.

THE FRENCH PARLIAMENT reassembled on November 6 without a Cabinet. After Edouard Herriot had once prevented the congress of the Radical Socialists from demanding that he and the three other representatives of the party withdraw from Premier Poincaré's Government, a last-minute resolution was put through calling for such action. Upon receipt of the four resignations Premier Poincaré at once sent his resignation to President

Doumergue. The defection of the Radical Socialists from the coalition Government has long been brewing. Their primary objection to Poincaré's policy was based on the proposal to restore in part the opportunities of Roman Catholic missionaries in the French colonies. Religious bitterness has been acute lately in France as well as in this country. Rumania was also without a cabinet as this issue of *The Nation* went to press. The Brătianu Government had resigned, but the leader of the National Peasant Party had refused to form a cabinet unless he could have full liberty of action. The old guard was unwilling to concede so much.

UNDER OUR GUNS, with a score of airplanes circling overhead, Nicaragua held its "free" election on November 4 and has chosen General José María Montecada, Liberal candidate, as its President. The result was not unexpected. There was little to choose between, both candidates having committed themselves to intervention by our marines in return for the opportunity to run for office under protection of our bayonets. The question that interests us is not which one of the obsequious candidates gets into office but whether the marines, having accomplished their professed purpose, will remove themselves from the country. Will they come home, or do they intend to stand guard over Nicaragua's new President to protect him from the Sandinistas—who are not reported as having turned up at the polls on November 4.

WITH BANDS PLAYING and crowds cheering, twenty-six knitters who have been on strike against the Allen A Hosiery Company of Kenosha, Wisconsin, marched to jail to begin indeterminate sentences for contempt of court because they refused to pay a fine levied by Federal Judge F. A. Geiger for defying an injunction. This injunction was a sweeping order against picketing which the Allen A Company secured by evading the spirit of Wisconsin's liberal labor laws and going to the federal courts on a technicality. The imprisonment of the strikers without trial by jury in a progressive State like Wisconsin emphasizes the need of a new law limiting the power of federal courts to issue injunctions in labor disputes. The menace of irresponsible power in the hands of federal judges has also been demonstrated recently by the dismissal of the case against Judge William H. Atwell of Texas, whose attack upon the Brooklyn lawyer, F. R. Serri, was described in *The Nation* of August 29. After Mr. Serri had attacked the credibility of a prohibition officer Judge Atwell said: "In my country had you made such an accusation against an officer of the law the officer would have smashed you before you got out of the courtroom. Would you like to go to jail with your client?" When Mr. Serri sued Judge Atwell for \$50,000 damages for slander the suit was dismissed by Federal Judge Campbell with these words: "The law is settled that judges of courts of record of superior or general jurisdiction are not liable to civil actions for their judicial acts even when such acts are in excess of their jurisdiction and are alleged to have been done maliciously and corruptly."

THE FINAL CONDEMNATION of Brookwood Labor College by the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor was one of the most inexcusable pieces of bureaucratic tyranny that our labor movement has ever known. When the original position was taken against Brook-

wood last July by the American Federation of Labor only vague charges of "radicalism" were mentioned and there was no opportunity for an open hearing. This star-chamber procedure aroused such a storm of opposition from various labor unions that President Green hastily promised to consider protests before final action. Despite this promise he did not invite the Brookwood authorities to appear for a hearing, and the final order urging all affiliated unions to withdraw support from the institution was quite as peremptory as the first. President Green then had the audacity to declare that "So far as I am advised the college authorities did not ask to present their side of the case either at our July meeting in Atlantic City or the one . . . on October 18." This after scores of letters and telegrams had poured into the offices of the American Federation of Labor asking for a hearing for Brookwood, and after the college authorities had telegraphed and written for such a hearing. What are we to think now of President Green? Meanwhile we appeal to all friends of workers' education to rally to the defense of Brookwood.

IN ROBERT LANSING there was profound knowledge of international law and far greater wisdom as counselor to the President than has generally been admitted. Deeply convinced of the guilt of the Germans—being entirely ignorant of the French and Russian pre-war conspiracies—and profoundly affected by the lies of the period, he was for unrelenting war, but only while it lasted. Before we entered the war he demanded that we treat Great Britain precisely as severely as we did Germany in the Lusitania notes. It was Lansing indeed who framed the stiff note to England in connection with her seizure of American ships and her violation, as he privately said, "of every canon of international law," which lay upon Wilson's desk from May of 1915 until November, to go forward then entirely emasculated. When Secretary Lansing reached Paris for the Peace Conference he was outraged, as were his associates, Henry White and General Bliss, at the way in which they were shelved. Sorely tempted to resign, Mr. Lansing held on lest Berlin derive encouragement from his retirement. When he returned to this country he made the fatal mistake of defending a treaty which he had bitterly opposed and knew to be wrong. In Paris he fought—unlike Wilson—for the immediate cessation of the hunger blockade of the Central Powers; had his wise plans been followed Europe would have been rehabilitated much sooner. As for his dismissal from office by his raging and ungrateful chief, nothing was more to Mr. Lansing's credit than the acts which roused Mr. Wilson's ire. Beyond that, he was a sensitive, fine-minded American, who, whatever his faults of judgment, set a very high standard for public servants to live up to.

A MASTER-BUILDER, perhaps the master-builder of the United States, died in New York on October 30. Otto M. Eidlitz was a man extraordinarily beloved both by the labor unions and the capitalists who rear the great structures in New York City and elsewhere, by the latter to such an extent that he was constantly refusing work that was offered to him—a \$3,000,000 contract just before his death. This was not only because of his attractive personality and his sterling honesty, but because his heart was set on producing a fine quality of work. For that, like every real artist, he cared far more than for any financial return. He was an admirable employer of labor, just and sym-

thetic, with a clear understanding of the working man's side. The business of building in New York has been particularly subject to graft and has often been gravely harassed by labor-union blackmail and extortion. Against that Mr. Eidlitz set his face like flint, but, best of all, he was likewise equally outspoken about the many wrongs committed by capital. So clear was his impartiality that he was asked to become the author of an arbitration agreement which after twenty years is still largely in force. In war time the government called upon him for aid, which he gave without pay. Then, too, he proved himself a leader and a great force for conciliation. To the day of his death he was able to make stubborn, unjust, and less honest employers than himself come to his point of view. Were there many men like Mr. Eidlitz, the problems of labor and capital would profit enormously.

TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS AGO Martha Berry took two children from the back-country districts of Georgia into her own home and began to teach them the rudiments of book knowledge and manual work. After a time she was able to build a tiny school-building and a dormitory for ten pupils. Today the Berry Schools of Georgia, housed in modern dormitories and school-buildings, have 1,000 pupils from the poorer families of the South, with 3,000 children on the waiting list and 7,000 alumni. The *Pictorial Review* made a wise and popular choice when, through its committee of judges, it gave its annual \$5,000 award for the best achievement by an American woman to Martha Berry. The South should also be proud of another educational experiment, which had its modest beginnings in Virginia last year and which continued in North Carolina this year. We refer to the Southern Summer School for Women Workers in Industry, which held its second session in Burnsville, North Carolina. In this school twenty-five girls from cotton mills, laundries, telephone exchanges, and cigarette factories of the South studied for several weeks the principles of social science as applied to their life tasks. They were told about the labor movement by some of its ablest exponents. They went back into the factories of the South with a determination to make their new learning count for the improvement of the conditions of their class. We hope for a continuation of this work.

FIRST FROSTS HAVE COME, Atlantic liners are charging off-season rates, and from Maine to California the American fireside is settling down to an exciting winter. For Mary and John and Aunt Jane have been abroad this year. Mary had a "wonderful time"; John spent the summer, after the Olympic Games, at the Dome in Paris; Aunt Jane is working feverishly on her first "talk" to the woman's club. The house is full of souvenirs, and reminiscences hover in the air like the smokes of Indian summer. Almost 320,000 American citizens have traveled abroad since January 1, and 35 foreign countries are richer by \$877,000,000, a figure which will "probably exceed even our net export of capital during the year," according to Dr. Ray Hall of the Department of Commerce, who has made a study of travel statistics for the first eight months of 1928. American tourists in 1927—285,000 strong—spent \$770,000,000 abroad. The increase during 1928, Dr. Hall estimates, will be \$107,000,000, making the largest total for any year since 1919-1920, when European travel was resumed after the World War.

Hoover Wins

AS was foreordained, Herbert Hoover has won the Presidency, and by an amazing margin. The country has again voted to continue in office a selfish and reactionary government which should, for its sins, long ago have been reduced to impotence. For this victory Mr. Hoover can personally claim little credit. Millions of honest, unprejudiced Americans who believe in him as a man and as a humanitarian, including many readers of *The Nation*, have voted for him, sometimes as a lesser evil, but often because of genuine admiration for him, his achievements, and his point of view. Aside from these voters, however, from the beginning of the campaign there has been a group to whom he emphatically owes his success: Prejudice, Bigotry, Superstition, Intolerance, Hate, Selfishness, Snobbery, and Passion. Had he uttered no word and made not a single gesture these, his bond-servants, would still have placed him in the White House. It is idle to say that he did not wish their aid. At his right hand and at his left stood these furies of our political life to the very end of the campaign, without adequate rebuke, without the scorning and the scourging which should have been theirs. To them Herbert Hoover is in lasting debt, as well as to the forces of privilege, of economic power, of concentrated wealth.

Upon great masses of our fellow-citizens his victory serves notice that no one of their number may aspire to the highest office of the land; to multitudes it tells the tale that the aspirations of their fellow-men may be vetoed where passion holds sway. From it may be deduced a triumph for those who would upon certain moral issues impose their will upon their fellow-men whatever the costs. Let no man dare the sacred order hereafter unless his be the right clothes, the right accent, the right education, the right association, and above all the right faith. Let him be sure that his habits shall be those of Baptists and Methodists alike; let him never seek to face again the intolerance of the Protestant. We chronicle a victory for know-nothingism, for the narrowest of nationalistic ideals, for those who would surround this country with Chinese walls, with barriers against trade, barriers against peace, reinforced by encircling steel.

Each of these groups will henceforth claim the victory as its own and seek to grow fat upon it. Each will demand its toll and each read into the verdict the interpretation it desires. More than ever our American plutocracy sits deep in the saddle; more than ever the power of Big Business remains unshaken; more than ever the god of Prosperity is enthroned in Washington. At his feet new and sacrilegious offerings have been made. It is he who is to dominate the nation's communal life, since Mr. Hoover dedicated himself to this idol throughout his campaign. In addition to the full dinner-pail Mr. Hoover offered the full garage. Upon the homes with telephones, radios, electricity he dwelt unceasingly and in detail; only as if through an afterthought he added that he sought to abolish poverty in order that the plain citizen might have leisure for things of the spirit. Things of the spirit! Two words for them; ten thousand for the things that make for physical comfort. Ten thousand words to prove that all these material gains were the direct gift not of nature or of industry, but of the Republican Party itself. Not with bread and circuses this time,

but with garages and motor cars and radios and the electric current and the profits of the Stock Exchange!

What will Hoover do with his opportunity; what will he make of himself? The passions that fought for him may claim him as their own. Or it may be that he will free himself to do those things for which his warmest friends and admirers hope—to make over the unbalanced, absurdly ill-grown structure of government, to stress economic issues, to bring into his administration the spirit of science, of the engineer, and to inspire it with his desire to abolish poverty for the neediest. Let us hope that this will prove to be the case; that his acts in office may belie the melancholy content of his words upon campaign platforms; that something of the warm, human passion for the under dog which runs deep in the veins of his adversary may yet move Mr. Hoover to see that the masses advance best when progress and prosperity come from underneath. For the benevolent autocrat remains an anachronism in the body politic, and the teaching that prosperity has its *fons et origo* in Washington will return again and again to plague him who at the same time, with amazing inconsistency, denounces those who would bind together government and business.

As for the rest, progressives and liberals will see, we are sure, in this decisive triumph only a call to an intenser opposition, to a bolder challenge of those who once more have taken the government for their own. These men who declare that they alone are fit to rule, that in their high hands the destinies of the land must be placed—whether they sit in the seats of the political mighty or of their masters the overlords of trade—are the very men who may be counted on to blunder and to fall. It is they who give us our Dohenys, our Sinclairs, our Falls, our Denbys, and our Daughertys. It is they who compel such housecleanings as those that have periodically rocked the business world in insurance, in oil, in the railroads, and, soon to be, in the power industry. Give them the reins and they cure no fundamental ills; indeed they dare not prescribe for a trade so ill as coal-mining. For they see only symptoms and not causes, and have no real remedies as cures.

Perhaps it is just as well that Herbert Hoover has his chance to show what the engineer in the White House can do; whether or not he has it in him to work and to give and take with other men in order to achieve as President. Perhaps his abode in the White House may have been ordained to hasten the coming of a better day and a new order of society by demonstrating that not even an engineer may succeed by empiricism alone. Reason for discouragement and despair? Not the least. It merely means a longer struggle, a deferring of the day when the American people will realize that they must rouse themselves lest they lose forever the opportunity to do so. How many times did not the Slave Power achieve its victory at the polls, only to crumble from within and by pressure from without? Another day, another battle! A true reformer finds in defeat the stimulus to more determined advocacy of the principles which animate him. Now is the time to plan for a union of forces to create a truly liberal party which shall take for its own the best of the issues discarded by the Democrats during their gradual moral disintegration.

Fritz Kreisler

FORTY years of virtuosity before American audiences! That is what Fritz Kreisler can today look back upon with complete satisfaction, or could if it were ever possible for an artist of his stature to be satisfied with his achievements. A prodigy at ten when he won the eagerly coveted first prize and gold medal of the Vienna Conservatory of Music, he next carried off the Premier Prix de Rome at the Paris Conservatory at the mature age of twelve. He first toured the United States at thirteen, in 1888-1889, with Moritz Rosenthal, only to return to Vienna to complete his non-musical education before making his second debut in Berlin as a youth of twenty-four. Since that time he has been a precious possession of the whole world, with the United States, in part because of his American wife, a second fatherland. But a man like this is, of course, an international possession. He is at home in a world which, Heaven be praised, knows no nationalistic boundaries and was less affected by the hates and prejudices of the World War than almost any other sphere of intellectual activity, though not unaffected as Kreisler himself learned.

That he stands in the front rank of living violinists is, we believe, undisputed, and, unlike some of his contemporaries, he has genius unmated with eccentricity and quite unspoiled by success. Like Paderewski and a few other musicians, Fritz Kreisler would have been a great man in other walks of life—he could, by the way, have been a great pianist had he not preferred the violin. The little volume of his war experiences reveals an ability in the literary field to make one long for a day to come when he may be inspired to set forth the world as he sees it from the highest rung of the musical ladder, to put into words his hopes and aspirations for music and musicians.

No one can hear him play without sensing the depths of the nature that is his. That superb presence on the concert stage, that toss of the head when he stops playing, that intensity of his spirit and breadth of artistry—those speak for themselves. Bowing, technique, tone, understanding, intellectual interpretation are all there in fullest degree. It is no wonder that the critics have long since exhausted their superlatives—when they are fair—and have been often restricted to recording the fact of his playing to jammed houses and the nature of his performances; the vocabulary of praise is too readily exhausted.

Today we had rather dwell upon the man himself, his fineness and his greatness. Not only has he been blessed with complete modesty, but also with complete kindness, qualities too rarely met with among those who hold commanding positions. Something of the woe of the world is stamped upon his features, especially since the World War. Into that horror a stupid militarism ordered him and he went, to be saved for all music-lovers by an injury which brought his government to its senses. Released, he came back to the United States only to suffer, as the passions rose and the hatred grew, at the hands of our superpatriots, our 100 per cent Americans. So far as we are aware no word of pain, or complaint, or criticism has ever crossed his lips. Perhaps he, too, felt that his persecutors knew not what they did. He had seen the mad passions of his countrymen abroad. He must have realized to what baseness patriotism in war time descends. His very greatness made him beyond

hurt. It is related of Guizot that once his adversaries after violently assailing him roared: "Now what have you got to say?" He replied: "That you have not yet climbed up to the level of my contempt." So sharp a retort could never have come from Fritz Kreisler; but his assailants surely never climbed to the lowest level of anything but his pity. Fortunately time has brought sense to this land. No man, we are sure, is more welcome in America and none is more at home. To an unprecedented degree Fritz Kreisler is assured of the homage of the music-lovers here and under every other flag.

Literature and Drama

DAVID BELASCO occupies a peculiar position in the contemporary American theater. Even his warmest admirers would not maintain that he enjoys today any obvious preeminence like that which was his some years ago and yet, though he has ceased to be regarded as a leader and an authority, he continues to be one of the most successful of Broadway producers. Time was when an announcement of his plays was, as a matter of course, given the most prominent place in any forecast of the season and when his name was more often mentioned than that of any one else in any discussion of the American theater. His aims, his theories, and his hopes dominated all discussions of the stage, and his productions were not only the most successful but the most esteemed as well.

Today few think of him as in any sense a leader, and even his most popular offerings seem somehow old-fashioned. And yet, going his own way, he holds his own audience in his own way. Younger men have mocked his stubborn loyalty to his conception of theatrical realism, and many critics have berated him for his persistent avoidance of any play which could possibly be considered to possess any literary merit. Yet loss of prestige has not involved loss of business success. The theater which bears his name is no longer considered as once it was a Temple of Art, but there are few other playhouses in New York as often filled, and the Belasco audience still thinks of itself as a thing apart from both *hoi polloi* on the one hand and the high-brow on the other.

The most successful part of his career as a dramatist lay within that comparatively brief period when acted plays were not generally printed. Today the successful drama is quite as likely to be published as it was in the time of Shakespeare or Congreve, but of Mr. Belasco's innumerable pieces a relatively insignificant number have been seen in type and the appearance of six of them (only three of which have previously been printed) in a single volume* has a particular sort of interest. Their author has always been one of those who insist that the drama is a thing apart, that no sort of judgment passed upon it outside of the theater is of any significance whatever, and it is not irrelevant to inquire, now that the text of these selected plays is available, whether or not there is some relation between this contention and that loss of prestige which Mr. Belasco has certainly suffered. In a preface he states the heart of his creed:

The standards by which true literature is judged can-

* "Six plays: Madame Butterfly, Du Barry, The Darling of the Gods, Andromeda, The Girl of the Golden West, The Return of Peter Grimm." By David Belasco. With an Introduction by the Author and Notes by Montrose J. Moses. Little, Brown and Company. \$4.

not properly be applied in judging drama. Ability to write well in other fields (in poetry or narrative, fiction or biography) does not necessarily imply ability to write well, or even tolerably, for the stage. Indeed, the one talent seems generally to exclude the other. . . . A play—a genuine play—is a very distinct and special form of writing. There are many compositions extant, in the form of colloquies and dialogues, containing elements of literature such as poetry, rhetoric, and eloquence, which are nevertheless damnable as drama. And, per contra, there are many most excellent plays which are insignificant as literature. My plays are all written to be acted, not read.

Now part of this is so obviously true that it is very easy to accept the rest without thinking. Many great writers have undoubtedly written very bad plays. Dramatic composition is certainly a form of writing quite different from any other. But does the fact that much good literature is not good drama mean that all good drama is not good literature, or has Mr. Belasco been proceeding all his life upon a conclusion deduced from what the pedantic would call a "fallacy of the illegitimate converse"? Ability to write well in other fields does not necessarily imply ability to write well or even tolerably for the stage. Perhaps, even, the one talent does usually exclude the other. But does that suggest that good drama is necessarily marked by an absence of sincerity, depth, and veracity which only the glamor of the footlights can hide? It may be that the answer is No and that Mr. Belasco's career in the theater wrecked itself upon something as seemingly remote from practical playwriting as the fallacy of an illegitimate converse. Through the careful avoidance of literature in all the plays which he has either written or chosen for production, he has succeeded in remaining a commercially successful manager, but he has surrendered to others the leadership which he once had.

"Look Upon the Jury!"

"PRISONER, look upon the jury!" the judge directs at the beginning of every criminal trial. It would be well if not only the accused but all of us looked upon the jury a good deal more carefully and thoughtfully than we are given to doing, for the jury is the source of justice in the judicial system under which we live. The judge, the prosecuting attorney, the police, the witnesses expert and inexperienced are all tributaries to the stream whose head is the twelve ordinary citizens who pass on the facts establishing guilt or innocence.

This is a day when democratic institutions are under attack from two sides. The more radically minded are out of sorts with them because of a feeling that they have failed to produce government in the interest of the people. The more conservative are condemning democratic institutions in the hope of getting rid of such popular control as they confer. But the attack on the jury system draws its support chiefly from the ranks of the conservatives. With all its defects the jury system seems to be the best method to date, either tried or suggested, for dealing with crime. It is quite possible, as a good many students of the law advocate, that in certain cases accused persons should be allowed to choose trial by a judge in preference to that by a jury (such technique is already considerably in use), but the

right to a decision by a jury should remain unabridged whenever it is the preference of a prisoner.

At the same time believers in the jury system should recognize that many of the criticisms made in connection with it are sound. A large proportion of the men who are most needed on such bodies manage to evade service and are quite callous in their indifference to their obligations under our judicial methods. The same men who assail the police for failing to protect them against crime will use any right or subterfuge to avoid serving on a jury. The same men who take pains to vote on Election Day consider it a matter of course to seek exemption from the usually more important duty of serving on a jury. *The Nation* is already on record as against exemption from jury service by occupation. Professional men, a highly necessary element if juries are to be what they ought to be, have so arranged it that they are practically all excused from service. We see no reason why there should be exemption for any occupation as such. Excuses should all be personal, granted only for the best of reasons by the presiding judge. Blanket occupational exemptions have been obtained in nearly all cases, we surmise, not for valid reasons but because the men concerned have unusual influence and have not scrupled to use it. There is no reason either why women should be exempt from jury service, as they are generally in this country. Now that they have the vote, jury service should be recognized as a logical civic right and obligation.

But the fault is not all with those who serve on our juries—or refuse to. Official regulations and methods in connection with jury service seem to be contrived so as to make such work as expensive, inconvenient, and obnoxious as possible. In the first place the prevailing pay of \$2 or \$3 a day is absurdly antiquated. There was a time in this country when that represented at least the pay of a day laborer, but that day is long past. Judges and prosecutors have been busy in getting their pay raised, but they have had no word to say in behalf of the jurymen. The jurymen's pay ought to be at least doubled, and it should be available to every man who is called to court for any purpose in connection with jury service. The prevailing practice is to pay only such men as actually act on a jury, while numerous others are called to court as possible jurymen, losing half a day or more from their work only to be sent away unused and unpaid.

Equally or more important is some method by which a prospective jurymen may be allowed to choose the time when it is most convenient for him to serve. The busy season varies in different occupations, just as personal plans do. Of course everybody could not be exactly accommodated, but an approximation might be reached. Some such arrangement is already in effect in certain places, as for instance in Essex County, New Jersey. There the court calendar is divided into three terms, and when drawn for jury duty one has the privilege of picking the term most convenient.

Finally a great deal of time is wasted in connection with jury service through absurd rules and practices which are generally one-sided. A man called for jury duty is liable to a fine if he is late, but a tardy judge will keep a whole courtroom of men waiting for half an hour and then take his seat without a word of apology. Exemption from jury service would not be sought so persistently if it were not for the fact that busy men resent the way in which their time is squandered and their personal rights ignored.

It Seems to Heywood Broun

A YOUNG Latin American complained to me the other day that there was in all these United States not one statue erected in honor of Francisco Miranda. I shrugged polite sympathy but confessed that I had never heard of the gentleman. He was not in my school-books. The young man from Central America undertook to rub the rougher edges from my ignorance and related to me briefly the life of Miranda of Venezuela. I cannot understand why his name is not mentioned with Lafayette, Rochambeau, and the rest, for he brought over a regiment to aid us in the War of Independence and served with the French forces here with great distinction.

My Latin-American friend said that he thought he could furnish an explanation for this land's neglect of the fame of Miranda. The Daughters of the American Revolution, he told me, had once contemplated some public honor for Miranda, but, upon examining his career, they found that he had lived in sin with a titled English woman and had also been one of the many lovers of Catherine of Russia.

This, to be sure, is merely hearsay. I do not care to libel the gallant Venezuelan or the lady of Russia. The Encyclopaedia Britannica is reticent in the matter and merely states that he went to Russia, "where he was warmly received." However, it appears as if the reception must have been too warm to conform with American standards.

And yet even the sparse life in the Encyclopaedia presents him as the most fascinating of all revolutionists. No one war was enough for Francisco Miranda. The liberty of the world lay on his conscience and after the last shot had been fired against the British he went to England and, with charming assurance, endeavored to drum up interest in an expedition to free Latin America. When the French Revolution broke out Miranda was in it. In Austria and in Turkey he agitated against existing tyrannies. Later he landed in Colombia, where he proclaimed freedom, and again in Venezuela. And it was here that he was captured and sent to Spain to die in a Cadiz dungeon.

Men of far less fire live icily in marble monuments. Even a Puritan community should be willing at this late date to forgive the sins which Miranda committed against the marriage code. And in the case of Catherine, for instance, how can anybody tell after all these years which one should shoulder the blame. If blame there was. The empress was a woman of great executive ability and few scruples. Miranda was far from home.

But, no matter what the facts, I'm for the statue. Monuments are peculiarly fitting anchorages for uneasy spirits. Those of the dead who were very good in life have no need of granite blocks to hold them down. In their conscience there is no disorder to make them dream and toss about. They even sleep too deeply to be at all concerned with the friendship of posterity. The consolations of sculpture should be reserved for men in whom purpose was half itch and half high principle. For in life the throb which lies in any such person sets him to wandering about the world. He cannot ever reach his goal, for he does not know precisely what it is. And so eagerness does not die with him. The world he left should give him rest by whis-

pering down to him through the earth, "There, there." And if posterity is kind it will make a monument, for that is practically the only way in which the living can pat a dead man on the back.

As a matter of fact, public monuments have a power for reformation which is largely neglected. Cast a man in bronze and set him at the intersection of two busy streets and he can hardly resist the urge to conform. If his private life was open to reproach this simple expedient lifts him out of error, for he no longer has a private life.

When I see Washington peering down above the tree-tops of a little city park I know that this was not the man who swore prodigiously. Under the hand of the reverent artist all the damns have disappeared. And each and every one of the many Lincolns in public places is a man about to speak nobly and in cadenced prose. You can look at any sculptor's Lincoln you please and I defy you ever to get the least suggestion that the gaunt man will grin and say, "It seems there was . . ."

And so it would be with Miranda if we made him into a statue. Into the bronze there might come an ardor and a yearning. It would be the ardor which sent Miranda to fight for American freedom and not at all the ardor which sent him to Catherine. Little children and Daughters of the American Revolution could pass by safely. A Miranda of metal would be without sin.

Perhaps it is rather a pity that we seldom set up statues of men who still live. It would have a most pronounced effect upon their conduct. If any community will agree to have me molded thin, austere, and earnest I will hereby agree to become precisely like that. I shouldn't like to make a fool of the sculptor. Nor of the public either. Marvels are possible in marble and the sculptor could make me alert and eager. If for instance he posed me on one toe sloth might well be shamed out of me.

I hate to wait for posthumous recognition. If the project is delayed until after my death the figure will serve only as a good example to generations yet unborn. I want the aid of example and inspiration myself. As a bicycle rider can go ever so much faster if only a motor sets him pace just so could I follow to glorious achievement a bronze Heywood Broun with sword held high and the light of consecration in my eye.

Just what this statue might be expected to inspire me with I am not so sure. The existence of such a monument would cut confoundedly into my working time. Always you might hope to find me lolling about the pedestal eavesdropping to hear the remarks of the passers-by. Perhaps I would be disappointed in that. Statues do not inflame the imagination of the public much. The first ten years of my life were spent in close proximity to Bolivar in bronze. I never knew his name. To me he was merely "that funny man riding a horse."

When I am unveiled I rather prefer to be set down while still afoot. I should be pedestrian in marble as in life. Also I suggest to the nameless sculptor that he do me fully clothed and with my trousers neatly creased. There is no point in sticking out for naturalism.

HEYWOOD BROUN

Wall Street's Speculative Optimism

By MERRYLE STANLEY RUKEYSER

[This is the first of a series of articles covering the more significant aspects of business and finance. The Federal Reserve Bank, super-power, the bunco game of hidden earnings and assets will be considered. The next article, Chain Stores, the Revolution in Retailing, will appear shortly.]

OF late, the building of financial castles in the air has resulted in the fulfilment of dreams. The tipsters, the windbags, and the unqualified optimists have for once been vindicated by the event. In speculative quarters, the unprecedented phenomena have been described as characteristic of a new era in finance and trade. Since 1922 representative industrial stocks have actually exceeded in their spectacular upturn the meteoric rises which charlatans predicted for their own shoddy financial wares. In the last seven years, seventy representative industrial stocks have trebled in value. Meantime, thirty representative railroad stocks have doubled in value. The experience of this post-war period has challenged the cynical old Wall Street aphorism that "stocks were made to be sold."

Is the American economic society better off as a result of the marking up of stock prices? Usually, there is an undeniable psychological exhilaration in periods of rising prices. The stock market has become a scoreboard for registering managerial success or failure. The big board gives the financially minded public an opportunity to applaud business achievements and to hiss at commercial blunders. The executives of companies whose stocks have been speculative favorites, such as General Motors, Chrysler, Radio Corporation of America, Montgomery Ward & Company, Sears Roebuck & Company, General Electric Company, International Harvester Company, American Smelting and Refining, and R. H. Macy & Company, have sensed tangible evidence that the crowd was with them. High prices for common shares constitute an evidence of public favor, and accordingly open the way to raising new capital on advantageous terms. The present period constitutes a golden opportunity for prosperous companies to raise additional funds through stock issues, which entail no definite promises to investors. Inasmuch as shares constitute a claim only to residual earnings after all prior obligations have been met, companies do not obligate themselves legally to show any earnings on their common shares. Accordingly, whatever inflation may have taken place in common stock values technically imposes no necessary hardships.

However, as a practical matter, executives feel called upon to justify market valuations of their securities through building up business profits. This pressure from the stock market, which is partly only psychological, intensifies the mad race for heightened volume. Moreover, the goad of speculators may tend to make corporate managers less open to socially wise innovations which cut down net profit available for dividends. There is a danger that it may discourage new adventures in profit-sharing, such as the plan of the Endicott Johnson Corporation which, after paying the regular dividend, credits one-half of the excess earnings to the account of a fund for employees, and that of Sears Roebuck & Company which makes substantial deductions from profits for the account of the fund which holds

stock in the company for employees. Such a liberal policy causes the ratio of net to gross earnings of the mail-order house to make a superficially unfavorable comparison with that of the F. W. Woolworth Company, which indulges in no similar deductions, although it remunerates store managers in accordance with the success of their particular units.

The social dangers of stock-market inflation, however, concern the consumer of merchandise less than the investor in securities. A long-term rise means that the investor must pay a higher price to buy a given amount of earning power, past, present, or prospective. It also entails a consistent reduction in the current dividend return obtainable on stocks. Such movements end at least temporarily when stock prices exceed a level at which new investors are attracted. Those who buy even the best stocks near the end of the cycle may have to wait patiently for years to get their principal back intact. Furthermore, no candid observer can deny that there is much lost motion in excessive and uninformed trading by amateurs, whose highly emotional operations tend to exaggerate price movements in both directions.

Until turning-points are reached, speculators, who are like participants in a game of pushball, enter the speculative arena, hoping to be able to pass the ball to some one else. Speculators, less concerned with intrinsic value than with the expectation that they can resell at a profit, hope that irrespective of the fantastic price they pay they will be able to find a still more optimistic buyer who will relieve them to their advantage. In the present set-up, the highest remuneration is paid to those who can accurately foresee changing security values. The rewards for canny judgment at the great whirlpool of speculation are prodigious, and though drastic punishment for blunders is far more general, the hope for success flares up eternally. Accordingly, statistical demonstrations of disappointments sustained by amateur traders are powerless to check the nationwide impulse to participate in prosperity without working.

The psychosis of the amateur financial mind is such that it rejects evidence of a thousand speculative failures and focuses attention on a few exceptional outstanding successes. The Italian-marble palaces along the north shore of Long Island, in Westchester, in California, and in Florida constitute the indigenous means of paying tribute to the extraordinary speculative intelligence of the small minority of successful financiers. In this fast-maturing country the crop of millionaires is large and growing. But the records show that for every palace built to glorify those who bought stocks near the bottom and sold near the top there are tens of thousands of average homes rendered a little sadder and more barren because of faulty speculative calculations.

Whether on Main Street or on Wall Street human beings only occasionally are able to think clearly and eschew feelings, emotions, passions. The prize for keeping one's head and acting promptly and independently during recurrent periods of popular delusions is great riches. That lure—and the thrill of the quickened chase for dollars—has thus far in 1928 drawn a record-breaking horde of men and women with little capital and experience, but with a vast amount of hope, to the great nerve center of speculation.

Some marginal traders succeed for a time, but ultimately most of the lay plungers fail. They constitute the suckers who create opportunities for more analytical financiers.

Speculation dates back to the first attempt of a mortal to tie the present to the future. Never before, however, have so many persons directly participated in security speculation as this year. The wider public, which was apathetic a few years ago when stocks were really on the bargain counter, began to clamor for stocks after they had already soared to unprecedented heights. Accordingly, the more recent advance cannot be explained exclusively in terms of cold logic. Proponents of the advance insist that the stock market has been discounting the arrival of a new era in American business. Unquestionably this post-war period has been marked by America's economic coming of age. Formerly many of the country's foremost projects, such as the railroads, were built in anticipation of future growth. Now American business is in a state of realization; it is cashing in on the foresight of the pioneers. Moreover, the post-war period has witnessed the emergence of America as the foremost creditor nation in the world. In pre-war times, America was debtor on balance, and the dividends and interest paid by American companies were formerly partly garnered by alien owners residing abroad. Such émigré securities have subsequently been repatriated, and the funds paid out to security owners flow back into the domestic stream of investable capital. For the first time in American history, capital has been generated at so rapid a rate that the supply has exceeded the demand. Security prices in recent years have been adjusting themselves to this new condition.

In pre-war times the investor still retained mental reservations toward even the largest American industrial corporations, which he considered unseasoned. Such companies were still an experiment in the competitive world, and timid investors used to capitalize corporate earnings with great moderation. Politically, trusts were on the defensive. But the new post-war period has been plainly the era of big business. Mass production and mass distribution constituted formulas for increasing the dominance of great corporations. Small and inefficient enterprises, confronted by intensified competition, began to suffer heavy mortalities. The better-managed corporations, with war profits behind them, built up huge corporate surpluses, squeezed the original water from their shares, and primed themselves for the new competition of the future. Gradually, even the less discerning perceived the consequences of the flowering of great corporate enterprises, and investors and speculators began to show a new faith in the future of securities of such favored corporations.

Stock prices represent an attempt to capitalize corporate earnings and dividends, present, past, and future, with due regard to prevailing interest rates. Most observers were inclined to regard the long-term decline in interest rates as the principal cause of the advance of security prices between 1922 and 1927. But in the last four to eight months interest rates have reversed their course, without checking the advance in stock prices. If there is merely a lag between interest rates and stock prices, it is a longer one than commonly experienced in past markets.

The old rule-of-thumb notion was that good stocks were worth ten times their earnings. At present, according to the compilations of the Standard Statistics Company, 429 representative industrial stocks are selling at 15.6

times earnings, 48 utilities are selling at 15.6 times earnings, and 37 railroads are selling at 13.6 times earnings. The changed basis cannot be explained solely on grounds of fluctuations in interest rates. It represents in part a new optimism concerning the future. The income tax on present income and the tax exemption of future possibilities have stimulated the wealthy classes to lay increasing emphasis on prospects, rather than on present realities. The price of stock represents an attempt to capitalize future dividends, and in their present mood investors and speculators are taking an extremely sanguine view of what future dividends through the years will be. Accordingly, buyers are willing to share a large part of the anticipated gains with sellers. The essence of the riddle concerning the financial aspects of the so-called new era is whether the public is ready as a permanent policy to capitalize corporate earnings more generously in stock prices than in the past.

Of course, in future periods of public pessimism the rate for capitalizing earnings will decline, but, in my opinion, will remain higher than the pre-war rate in comparable periods of depression. To support such an assumption, there is evidence that a relatively small number of business institutions will get an increasingly large share of the nation's and the world's trade, and there has been a growing public effort to buy a stake in such selected enterprises. Companies have been favored which seem to be the chief instruments through which America is expressing its new world leadership in finance and trade. The new set-up in business enhances the opportunities for large net profit by leaders. Moreover, an epidemic of mergers and consolidations has reduced unprofitable competition. Furthermore, important strides have been made in the last decade in the technique of management. Standardization and simplification have helped to reduce drains on profits, and further opportunities for cutting down primitive industrial waste are still open. Such advances enable well-managed companies to increase net profits without raising prices to consumers or cutting wages.

The cultivation of important new industries such as the automobile, the radio, and the airplane has heightened the productive facilities of this country and has increased the aggregate purchasing power. The fruits of mass production have been made available to an ever-widening circle of consumers through the magic of the instalment plan, which enabled the average man to spend far in excess of his current means. A rising standard of living, which was financed by the payment of higher real wages, constituted the basis for the wave of prosperity which rested on larger per capita consumption. The already insatiable demands of the ordinary person were whipped into a buying frenzy by high-powered advertising and selling, which increased volume without necessarily heightening the prudence with which consumers exercised their buying options. A phase of the improved living standard has been the electrification of the country in this push-button age. With power consumption increasing at the rate of 15 per cent a year, and with new economies in using fuel and through mergers and interconnections, the public-utility holding companies have waxed wealthy, and their securities have in many instances proved bonanzas to their holders.

Moreover, the railroads, under more friendly conditions of regulation under the terms of the Transportation Act of 1920, have regained at least a moderate amount of prosperity, reflecting marked improvement in operating efficiency.

By giving swifter freight service, the railroads have cut down the need for large merchandise inventories on the part of retailers. The carriers accordingly have fostered the new custom of hand-to-mouth buying, which tends to stabilize business. Dividends have risen more rapidly than earnings. On account of accumulated surpluses and better managerial methods, executives have felt it safe currently to pay out a larger share of net earnings than in the past. Fluctuating styles in the realm of investments have also changed the basis for pricing common stocks. Not only has there been a tremendous increase in the number of American security buyers with the rise of the small investor during the last decade, but there has also been a radical shift in investment taste. There has been a new appreciation of the value of common stocks, instead of bonds, as long-term investments for individuals who are more concerned with providing purchasing power for the future than a stipulated number of dollars of uncertain purchasing power. Related to this development has been the vogue for investment trusts in the United States in the last four years, trusts which transfer to experts, real and alleged, the problem of selecting suitable securities for the portfolios of laymen. Such cooperative funds automatically assure wide diversification and presumably expert selection. Investment trusts as a class have been large buyers of common stocks and the well-managed trusts come into the market as buyers when the more emotional public has become temporarily frightened.

The absence of pre-war panics, as a result of better administration of the banking machinery of the country, has extended the period of unbroken high industrial activity. And finally, in recent years, the reservoir of investable capital in the United States, which reflects a period of high

productivity, has been artificially swollen by the reduction of the federal government debt at the rate of a billion dollars a year.

The foregoing citation of factors which contributed to the long-term advance of stock prices constitutes to a marked extent water that has already gone over the dam. The investor must always decide to what extent stock prices have discounted new developments. Appraisers of speculative trends are already beginning to focus attention on the reaction which may be the sequel to the advance. John J. Raskob, Colonel Leonard P. Ayres, and a wide variety of delegates to the recent convention of the American Bankers Association publicly confided their belief that the present level of stock prices is too high. But for weeks the public tended to ignore such warnings, just as it defied the cautionary leadership of the Federal Reserve System, whose attempt to put the brakes on speculation in the first third of the year only succeeded in causing two short periods of drastic liquidation. Subsequently, stock prices and brokers' loans soared to unprecedented summits.

Pseudo-scientific forecasters have made a lamentable failure for several years in calling the turns on this remarkable stock market. Financial high priests have been repeatedly wrong in articulating the oracular judgment that prices were too high. Meantime, out-and-out bulls, of the type of William C. Durant, have been more reliable prognosticators, although on occasions Mr. Durant's expressions of optimism have come only shortly before a drastic intermediate reaction. If such men continue indefinitely to view the market as roofless, they will doubtless at length prove spectacularly wrong—at least, from the criterion of short-term results.

The Real Situation in Russia*

By ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS

FUNDAMENTAL to any understanding of the real situation in Russia is the fact that Communist Party policies are not determined by a few score leaders, but by the hundreds of thousands of the members; that the course of the revolution is controlled by the rank and file, long and intensely trained in political thought and action. In them resides a vast revolutionary intelligence that is not to be fooled by the resounding phrases of journalists and orators: a revolutionary will that is not to be thwarted by the intrigues of politicians or intimidated by bureaucrats. In every struggle they manage to get to the root of the issues, to make their voice articulate and their will effective.

But in "The Real Situation in Russia," not only do the author, Trotsky, and the translator, Max Eastman, ignore these facts but the publishers are moved to announce that "all the documents in this book were suppressed and outlawed by the Stalin regime and came out of Russia underground."

Very luring to the reader, only it doesn't happen to be true. Long ago various sections of the book were published in the Russian press, particularly in the *Pravda*, official organ of the Communist Party with a circulation of over 600,000 penetrating into the farthest steppes and forests of

the Soviet lands. The first part of the book was printed in the *Pravda* of November 2, 1927. The substance of some of the second part in the issue of November 17. The Joffe letter, in its original form, appears in the magazine *Bolshevik*. If the reader wants it in English, let him ask at the public library for *Inprecor*, and in *Inprecor* of December 12, 1927, he will find the Counter-Theses on Work in the Village and other Opposition documents to the extent of 30,000 words. In them the Central Committee of the party is accused of "cheap sneers," "revenge," "knoting to the kulak" (rich peasant), "bourgeois lying." And all this, translated into three languages, is printed by the Central Committee and distributed throughout the world. Surely an original method of suppressing and outlawing documents!

The controversy with the Opposition is presented by Mr. Eastman in his preface and in the copious notes which accompany the text as a contest between two sets of leaders: "the clear-headed honest revolutionists" against the "reactionary bureaucrats, politicians, and heelers." As in the Zoroastrian religion a duel between the forces of good and evil, the God of Light, Trotsky, pitted against the God of Darkness, Stalin. This version of the Russian Revolution quite accords with the conception of the hero-worshipping Westerner; the giants and geniuses at the top determining

* "The Real Situation in Russia." By Leon Trotsky. Translated by Max Eastman. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$2.

the policies and the rank and file acquiescently carrying out the program handed down to them. But it is not, it has never been so. The leaders propose, but the party masses dispose. Again and again they have not hesitated to reject the proposals of Stalin, Bukharin, Trotzky—even of Lenin. But in "The Real Situation in Russia" this fact is never touched upon. In the present controversy, then, it is essential to know the feelings of the party masses about the program and tactics of the Opposition and their verdict.

Let us take a typical group, a "cell" of the party, not in Moscow but in the country. Let us go to Kvalinsk on the Volga where I lived for fourteen months. Of the seventy Communists in the town, twenty became well known to me by frequent visits to my house, journeyings together into the villages, and subsequent correspondence. Here are a few:

Stephanov, the quiet bullet-scarred Red armyist, now on the ring post that brings Moscow a month nearer to the snowbound villages beyond the Volga. Into the village his sledge sweeps with jangling bells calling everybody to the Soviet. Shaking the snow from his coat, he plunges into the crowd, shouting greetings, distributing mail, taking subscriptions for the peasant papers, answering complaints in Chuvash, Mordvin, and Tartar. Blizzards rage, he is pursued by hungry wolf-packs, kulaks conspire against him, his child dies, but he never misses a trip, never loses patience and good humor.

The students Rodenov and Kobilov, standing with clenched fists before a portrait of Marx, dedicating their lives to communism and to good roads in Russia; dragging sleds from hut to hut gathering gifts of grain and cabbages for a Lenin-corner, entering the village clubs to drive out drinking and hooliganism with games and books and revolutionary songs.

Khonin, the rural judge, discoursing to the peasants on the moot questions of the day: why boys steal grain, why families break up, why wives suddenly become unmanageable. All day holding official court in the village school, then, round the samovar, private court till midnight, adjusting land disputes, reconciling hot-tempered sons with despotic fathers, getting peasant opinion on proposed changes in the law, expounding the Soviet theory of law, not as codes superimposed by autocratic rulers but as rules of life drawn up by the people themselves, calling up visions of the society to be, without judges or courts or jails. A few hours sleep in the strawshed, wrapped in his *shuba*, then at it again.

If one must have a hero of the Revolution, why not find it in groups like this, working away in the 300,000 villages of Russia with all the diplomacy of Chicherin, the eloquence of Trotzky, the energy of Stalin, the single-heartedness of Lenin. With no plaudits or drums to cheer them on, fighting against age-old ignorance and traditions on these lone far-off fronts, as valorously as in 1917 they fought on the barricades and against the armies of the imperialists.

Now came the Opposition, telling how to deal with the peasants. In the papers columns of speeches explaining the new program, in person two Opposition leaders from Moscow. Stripped of glittering phraseology the gist of the new proposal was: "Curb the kulak (rich peasant)! Organize the poor!" But this was precisely what the Kvalinsk Communists were doing with all their might. They were organizing the farm hands into unions; exempting the poor peasants from taxes; advancing them loans for horses, seeds,

implements; uniting them in tractor artels and cooperatives; defending their interests in court; at every turn, with every strategy, raising barriers against kulaks and nepmen.

What new concrete measure did the Opposition propose? It was this: A forced loan of 150 million poods from the kulak. Or in the fervid words of one of the Oppositionists: "Let the poor peasants rise up, grab the kulak by the throat, and shake out a billion rubles!" A seductive and exhilarating proposition. No longer the patient, nerve-wearing, laborious methods of circumventing the kulak. But falling on him with a bludgeon, in one fell swoop smashing and ruining him altogether.

Glorious but not revolution, was the verdict of the Kvalinsk Communists. Despite the dazzling revolutionary phrases in which it was couched and the apparently revolutionary action to which it summoned, they branded it as anti-revolutionary. They condemned it as the device of men who might be brilliant internationalists and Marxian scholars, but who were abysmally ignorant of Russian realities in rural life; the fantastic scheme of urbanites isolated from the villages. They rejected it as adventurist, visionary, and impossible. It was impossible because there was no way of defining the kulak. Only five of the 34,000 peasants in the Kvalinsk district had four horses—these might be kulaks. But how select the kulaks among the 10,000 two and three-horse peasants? A sheer impossibility. For this reason the forced grain levy would fall not only on the kulak but on the middle peasant with disastrous consequences. For if Moscow could arbitrarily commandeer his surplus, what inducement to produce? Why toil and sweat only to see the fruits thereof taken away from him? Far better to sow just enough for his own needs. The result would be little grain on the market, no grain for export, the complete disorganization of agriculture. Thus the blow aimed by the Opposition at the kulak and striking the middle peasant would shatter the economic basis of the Soviet state.

At the same time the attempt to enforce the grain loan by rousing the enmity of the village would be a shattering blow at the moral basis of the Soviet state. For the peasant no longer, as of old, meekly submits to ukases from Moscow. As these Kvalinsk Communists knew so well, a decade of revolution has created a new peasant: independent, conscious of his power, jealous of his rights. Resentful of anything superimposed on him, he respects only those laws which he has had a part in formulating. Even in 1918-1920 the grain requisitions roused him to rebellion and a wave of revolt swept through the villages. In 1928 a forced grain loan would be rank insult to his sense of justice, an affront to his new-born pride of citizenship. He would resist it by every means at his command. That would mean once more the army in the villages, sabotage and hatred of the Communist regime. It would mean the dissipation of the loyalty and confidence so carefully built up by seven years of tireless labor. At one stroke the destruction of the object which Lenin urged the party at all costs to achieve: the union (*smichka*) between peasants and workers. At one stroke the alienation of the peasants, the mainstay of the Red army—a blow at the national defense.

(It may seem that the disasters flowing from the Opposition measure are a bit exaggerated. But all these fears have been confirmed by the experiences of the past winter and spring, when even the mild measures adopted for forcing grain from the richer peasants brought a contraction of the sown area, the hostility of the villages, the active and

passive resistance of the peasants resulting in thousands of arrests.)

As the Soviet press continued to print the speeches of the Opposition, the Kvalinsk Communists became bored or annoyed. As the Opposition in their headstrong insistence on the prolongation of the debate went beyond all bounds of party discipline and Soviet legality, they became exasperated, embittered, enraged. First, this rage was directed against the Opposition leaders, then against the Central Committee of the party: "Had we done one-tenth as much, long ago we would have been expelled!" They sent demands to Moscow to cease conciliating and temporizing with the Opposition, to take drastic measures against the offenders. Thousands of other groups like Kvalinsk did the same. No Central Committee ever had such a clear, definite mandate to act. Only however after the practically unanimous condemnation of the Opposition by the party in the Fifteenth Congress and by all the Communist parties of the world in the Comintern was it expelled in a body. The intransigent and irreconcilable, refusing to bow to the will of the party, were ordered into exile.

This exiling is depicted in a highly sensational manner, and according to Mr. Eastman not only Trotsky but "his friends were violently dragged out of their homes, shipped into desert. . . ." Very lurid, but that is not the way it happened to Trotsky's friend, Feodorov (page 204) in whose home I lived in Moscow. As an active Oppositionist he was slated for exile and the G.P.U. proposed that he join Trotsky at Alma Ata. Feodorov protested that he didn't like the climate. A few days later, and over the telephone, the G.P.U. asked: "How about going to America? We can fix up a job for you in the Amtorg there!" Feodorov's wife was in raptures. But not Feodorov. His was a most exacting taste in places of exile. Courteously but firmly he objected. So while the G.P.U. racked its brains in an effort to please their fastidious client, Feodorov went on a visit to Leningrad, then to Zinoviev and Kamenev in exile, some sixty miles from Moscow, carrying rugs and curtains for their barely furnished quarters. Finally after a month of *pourparlers* a satisfactory place was found for Feodorov—the city of Kharkov with a position as manager of a chemical factory. His departure was celebrated by some fifty Oppositionists in his home, in an evening of fun and fellowship. They joked about the "vacation" the party was now giving them, the first in twenty years; they held mock trials, jocularly ordering this cold-hating comrade to exile in frozen Siberia, that heat-hating comrade to blazing Turk-estan. There were Russian dishes and steaming samovars, rollicking stories, folk-songs, and village dances till morning. A real old-time Russian *vecherenka*.

There is nothing of this sort in the book. For Mr. Eastman has set out by all means to convince the reader that the Oppositionists were the victims of unrelieved brutality and trickery and into his elaborate introductions and footnotes he admits only such material as would buttress his arguments. Many of the incidents related seem to me a bit distorted, if not apocryphal. However, granting their authenticity, against them can be placed others that would lead the reader to quite a different impression.

For instance, why has Mr. Eastman not included the authentic incident of November 7, at the textile factory where Trotsky was a great favorite? Suddenly without warning he appeared before the workers forming in line for the Tenth Anniversary parade. Cheers greeted his first

sentences glorifying the October Revolution. But as he passed to an attack on the party there were murmurs of dissent, then protests, then shouts: "Stop it!" Trotsky lashed out ferociously, calling them "bureaucrats! bourgeois!" "No, Comrade Trotsky," they cried holding up their hands, "we've been spinners and weavers here for twenty years. We're Communists and you're splitting the party." Trotsky persisted, rousing the workers to rage, and from their hands he escaped only by fleeing in his car. Everywhere the Opposition met a like rebuff. A spontaneous rejection by the very workers who were at first allured by the seductive promises of the higher wages and more privileges, held out in the Opposition program.

About this side of the conflict Mr. Eastman is eloquently silent. While dwelling on the "intrigues" and "ruthless strategy" of the party against the Opposition, he sedulously omits the ruthlessness and violence and provocative tactics employed by the Opposition against the party. One might think that the Oppositionists were all sweetness and light, harmless as a brood of doves. No hint to the reader that the faction they organized was put on a war footing, with secret pass-words, and a Red Cross captained by Joffe; that the Oppositionists forcibly seized halls, violently ejecting the regular party workers; that they repeatedly violated explicit promises given to the party; that they supplied the bourgeois press with party documents, and even waged their propaganda among correspondents of the foreign capitalist press.

It was by this defiance of all party discipline and loyalty that the Oppositionists alienated such sympathy as they first enjoyed among the workers. In their eyes the course pursued by the Opposition was leading to the disruption of the party, and—despite all disclaimers to the contrary—to the formation of a second party, a threat to the very existence of the proletarian state. Alarmed at this prospect the masses rallied to the defense of the party and to the support of the Central Committee. If in the provinces it was the agrarian program of the Oppositionists that defeated them, in the cities it was primarily their tactics, stirring deep and widespread indignation. They were condemned by the party masses as dangerous, if not destructive, to the revolution.

Nothing of this in the book. The feelings, ideas, and judgment of the party masses are ignored. They are completely left out of the picture, or dragged in now and then to appear shouting hosannas to the Opposition. The whole controversy is presented as a duel between contending leaders, with Mr. Eastman striving by all means to glorify the Trotskyists and to blacken the Stalinists, but in his bitter partisanship he overreaches himself. He leaves the party acquiescent in perpetration of a monstrous crime.

If this were true, how pitifully abject and contemptible the character of the million revolutionists comprising the Russian Party, how utterly lacking either in will or in intelligence. For either they have been hoodwinked and tricked by the "demagogism, lying, and jesuitry" of Stalin and his henchmen, and were ignorant of the situation; or craven, cowering, and browbeaten, they lack ordinary backbone and courage to rise up in protest against it. The party that wrought the greatest revolution in history, the party that fought through a decade of war, famine, blockade, now become a crowd of dupes or cowards!

Is it possible that anyone believes that this is the real situation in Russia?

Notes from Washington

By DUFF GILFOND

Washington, D. C., October 29

THE United States Tariff Commission has just completed a \$20,000 investigation on corn and sent its report to the President. The three Republican commissioners, although two of them knew better, in their timely solicitude for the farmer recommended an increase in the duty. Commissioner Lowell, nice old fellow, might be exempted from blame on the ground of ignorance.

Raising the duty on corn cannot help the farmer any more than changing the style in lamp-posts. Considering that only one-twenty-fifth of 1 per cent of the total production of corn and less than 2 per cent of the marketable surplus is imported, foreign competition can hardly be the cause of the farmer's troubles. Whether the duty on corn be fifteen or fifty cents he will still have difficulty in meeting his bills.

This condition, however, did not deter the President from ordering the investigation. It was, as explained to him, perfectly innocuous; the unsuspecting farmer could be persuaded it was a relief measure; and it could be completed just before the election. Mr. Coolidge was impressed, and although Secretary Jardine pooh-poohed it and the Democratic Tariff Commissioners Dennis and Dixon snickered, the farce began. It has been whispered that the President's letter to the Tariff Commission was not even tactful. Instead of requesting it to furnish the data on corn about which a question had risen, he forgot the commission was purely a fact-finding body and bluntly asked what it could do about raising the duty.

Chairman Marvin and Dr. Brossard, the high priests of protection, and their acolyte, Mr. Lowell, readily found a way to do Mr. Coolidge's bidding. Since the Attorney-General has ruled that the transportation rate may be included in determining the cost of production, the commissioners figure on the longest haul, regardless of whether the commodity will ever make it. In this instance they reckoned the freightage from the Middle West, the center of corn production, to San Francisco, the point of contact between American and Argentine corn. They could have selected the Eastern route, as imported corn is also used on the Eastern coast, but it is cheaper. To be sure, it is preposterous to think of trundling corn over the precipitous Rockies to protect American farmers and a pity to provoke the Argentine government when they send us so little, but politics are a grave consideration. Last year the commissioners gave American cherries a buggy ride all across the country with the hope of wresting the Eastern market from the Italian cherry grower. But the disadvantage of moving the Western cherries is so great that in the East Italian cherries are still eaten, without fatalities, and at a higher price.

The Tariff Commission has frequently been charged with a hyper-protective spirit. Commissioner Dennis once said the tariff, like the elbow, "flexes" one way: up, not down. This is not true, exactly. A survey of the pending investigations of the commission indicates that one is actually being made with the purport of reducing a duty. The commodity is matzoths, the sacramental bread of the

Jews, all of \$10,000 of which was imported in 1927. Matzoths could neatly be added to the list of important commodities on which the duty was reduced in the last three years: bob-white quail, paint-brush handles, cresylic acid, and phenol.

Matzoths came into the limelight when the yearning of a sentimental New York rabbi for the Palestinian brand became known to Senator Curtiss. That good Indian, with an eye on Jewish votes, especially from the Empire State, quickly took the matter up with the Tariff Commission. Between them they decided Jews would never go to heaven if they continued to eat American matzoths and, in spite of the fact that wool and aluminum have been badly in need of an investigation, this question of the matzoths could not be neglected. Besides, it will undoubtedly be easier for the Republican Party to hurt the feelings of the manufacturers of matzoths than those of wool and aluminum.

While futile investigations like the one on corn are rushed and completed, really important studies are still dragging on. Linseed oil is the prize example, although its mistreatment is not the fault of the Tariff Commission. Uniquely enough, this whole board, including the reactionary chairman, recommended a reduction of the duty more than five years ago. The President avoided the performance of a disagreeable task by pronouncing the data insufficient. Subsequent excursions by the commission's experts and the repeated raking up of more statistics have not changed the President's mind. The linseed oil report will never be fat enough to burst out of the White House pigeon-hole.

Mr. Hoover at length discontinued Negro segregation in the Department of Commerce—after refusing for two weeks to see the Negro delegation who, through political vantage, forced the move on him. "He is too busy with great national issues," his secretaries repeatedly explained. Dr. Work, after seven conferences with the colored leaders, generously agreed to wipe out segregation in the Pension Office of the Department of the Interior, where, incidentally, he had instituted it. But when he was asked to be equally fair about the General Land Office, he indignantly replied that he hadn't put it there. To Neval H. Thomas, president of the Washington branch of the N. A. A. C. P., he snarled: "Why are you kicking about Negro segregation in the government? Aren't you teaching in a Jim Crow school?"

The exigency of the election, nevertheless, provoked some humanitarian gestures. A wall was torn down in the General Land Office, actually leaving white and colored adjudicators in the same room. As it is a long room, however, with the desks at either end, and since the Mason and Dixon's line, left by the wall, has not been removed from the floor, over-dainty persons may still find some consolation. The colored adjudicators are deprived of the service of the twenty-four fair white girl stenographers, any of whom may take the dictation of the white adjudicators across the boundary line. But an attempt to placate them was made by substituting for their personal colored stenographer a white man. (Oh, it would have to be a man; white

womanhood must be protected!) The Negroes are still not grateful. When, hour after hour, they are obliged to wait because their sole stenographer is not available, they have been known to sulk.

In the Department of the Treasury, where Secretary Mellon denied the existence of such a shameful thing as segregation, thirty colored girls are banded together in one office under a colored chief. They don't sulk here. So vehement was Uncle Andy in his protestations that he succeeded in convincing even the victims. "There's no segregation here," the chief told me. "You couldn't expect them to put everybody in one room, could you?" Yet, in this group, known as the "colored division," one young woman submissively checks up figures, although she was accepted as a stenographer in the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Unfortunately, that was by telegraph after she had creditably passed the examination but before the authorities had seen the color of her skin.

Unlike his superior, Mr. Ogden Mills, the highbrow assistant, admits there is segregation, but offers a noble justification. "Be reasonable," he said to one reformer. "Would you have me put those segregated men out on the street?"

In the Driftway

FASHION is no respecter of business. It makes and unmakes industries with a nod. The cotton and woolen trades have had to face reduced business because of short skirts, while manufacturers of silk and rayon have basked in prosperity. Prohibition, the Drifter had supposed, must have benefited greatly the makers of candies and other sweets, since those who take their sugar in the form of alcohol do not normally use much of it in other ways, and those who have drubbed out of their lives the Demon Rum develop a taste for sugar in its original state. But it appears that the habit of cigarette smoking among women has offset whatever prohibition may have done to the advantage of the candy-makers, and the great British cocoa pool, confronted with lessened consumption and falling prices, has collapsed, pouring down maledictions upon the Wicked Weed which quite put to rout the phrases of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union. But the Drifter surmises that the passion for slenderness has hit the candy-makers harder than the feminine taste for tobacco. The desire for a willowy body, in accordance with fashion, has been strong enough to triumph over the love of chocolates. And where can our reformers find a basis for a moral crusade against those whose only sin is to seek the figure of a Psyche in preference to that of a Juno?

* * * * *

THE Drifter has never seen a ghost, yet he knows where they ought to be, for every day, from a certain window, he looks into a churchyard. Behind the tilting grave-stones and the little spire tower the buildings of lower Manhattan. Perhaps nearness to the dead intensifies the Drifter's liking for this little church. Probably the Drifter is a thing belonging to a race of things fundamentally afraid of dying—people who long ago, to appease that fear, called on their dead ancestors to help them, and arranged sticks and rocks in patterns, which grew into shrines and temples and churches.

WHAT began to happen to the churches of the world, the Drifter wonders, when wise city fathers, in the name of public health, began to forbid churchyard burial? What began to happen when the church was divorced from the bats and ghosts, and when that dark symbol, the sexton's spade, was driven beyond the city limits? What happened to the old ghosts of Egypt, and Greece, and Palestine, and Valhalla that are fused into something the Drifter still feels when he looks into the shadowy churchyard under his window? Who, after all, was the central figure in the church—the man who preached in the pulpit on Sunday or that grim priest who lived there seven days a week, the sexton who pulled the same bell-rope for services, for weddings, for alarms, for funerals, the man of the bell and the spade?

* * * * *

NOW, the Drifter is not superstitious. Sometimes he thinks he has transferred all his old religious impulses to a new creed built on love and hate, fear, wonder, and hope for all that America symbolizes by those tall buildings on lower Manhattan. Yet deep in his heart he feels that Westminster Abbey or little Trinity in Wall Street, churches associated with the physical dead, must always seem holier than ever will be Harry Emerson Fosdick's sanitary temple built for the Rockefellers on Riverside Drive. The Drifter is rather certain he would feel holier standing in the portal of the church and looking across the street at the tomb of that hardy man-killer, Grant, than gazing from the tomb toward that costly pile dedicated to God, through his servant John the Baptist—but free from any suggestion of the dead.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Reimbursing Bondsmen

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Among your readers there are some who have put up bonds on aliens ordered deported to Soviet Russia. We are looking for those readers to advise them that we can get their money back through the Department of Labor at Washington.

The impossibility of deporting to Soviet Russia in the absence of diplomatic relations has led the Department at last to see the wisdom of canceling the bonds and letting these aliens go. They are old cases dating back to the federal drive against Russian Communists.

Will your readers who know of any such bondsmen get in touch with the American Civil Liberties Union, 100 Fifth Avenue, New York City?

New York, October 26

ROGER N. BALDWIN

An Invitation

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: A dinner honoring John Dewey and the members of the Educational Delegation to Soviet Russia will be given at the Hotel Astor on November 10 by the American Society for Cultural Relations with Russia. Dr. Dewey, Fola La Follette, and others will speak. *Nation* readers who are unable to attend the dinner are cordially invited to come in for the program of speeches at nine o'clock.

New York, November 2

LUCY BRANHAM

Miss Mayo and the Rockefeller Foundation

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I brought to the notice of the president of the Rockefeller Foundation the statements made by Professor W. Norman Brown in his review of the two books in reply to "Mother India." I asked him whether the foundation had anything at all to do with the publication of the book. The president of the foundation, Dr. George E. Vincent, made the following reply:

First, the Rockefeller Foundation has had nothing whatever to do with Miss Mayo as an investigator or a writer, has had no request of her, has offered no suggestion, has paid no money to her, and has had no connection of any kind with her books.

Second, two men connected with the Rockefeller Foundation are friends of Miss Mayo's. Independently of each other, in Miss Mayo's own house, in the course of conversation, they were asked by Miss Mayo for suggestions about some movement which she might promote by first-hand study and the writing of a book. The initiative was hers.

Both men suggested that international health offered an important and promising field. Both suggested the health section of the League of Nations as the chief source of information on this subject.

As to India, one of them has never been in India, knows nothing about conditions there, and never even mentioned the subject in his talk with Miss Mayo. The other, having visited India, described it as an example of a country in which problems of modern preventive medicine have to overcome unusual difficulties. He spoke in general terms and made no specific suggestions.

Ames, Iowa, October 20

B. B. MUNDKUR

Police Cruelty

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: You frequently bewail the fact that policemen torture prisoners. In commenting on this evil you generally assume that it can be wiped out by abolishing the signed confession as evidence in a criminal trial. Such a step might affect the batting averages of prosecutors but I do not believe it would cause any far-reaching reforms in our police forces. Policemen are not particularly anxious to get signatures on dotted lines. They care a great deal, however, about securing material evidence, and if they can force a prisoner into furnishing them with valuable clues they will go about their task in a true, businesslike way.

As long as the police have access to prisoners the third degree will exist. This is inevitable wherever promotion in a police force is dependent upon "successful" arrests. To attempt to reform the character of the individual policeman is quixotic; the very nature of his work hardens him to human suffering. A few men may retain their sympathies while serving on our city forces, but the bulk of our policemen are too callous to feel any qualms about inflicting physical pain.

If this evil is to be abolished, the police must be denied access to prisoners. In other words, the control and operation of patrol wagons and police-station jails must be under some jurisdiction independent of the police. This jurisdiction would, in essence, be identical to that of the warden of a State penitentiary. It would be concerned only with the detention and transportation of prisoners and not with making arrests and securing evidence. It would, therefore, have no interest in the innocence or guilt of anyone.

Chicago, Illinois, October 10

JAMES E. FOSTER

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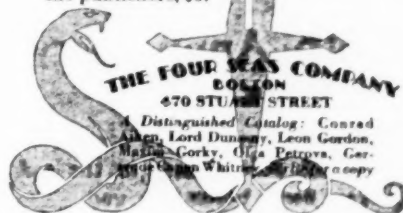
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To Certain Bostonians

By WITTER BYNNER

Secure on your seats you sit, the little while
Yet left you of your session among men;
But oh, the insecureness of the smile
With which you prate your carefulness again!
Again, again, and still again, till death
Shall relieve you of the tombstone in your minds,
You use the measured syllables of breath;
But naught of all that you are saying blinds
To unmercy a merciful world, O righteous five,
Though you be judge or governor or president.
You could not bear that men should stay alive
Who would not mean to life the things you meant—
But in the human heart, consider how
Secure they sit and sit, forever now.

Eleventh Anniversary

By MAX EASTMAN

Trotsky is banished; Lenin lies in state.
The sword, flung off, still flickers in the sod;
The god-destroyer, dead, becomes a god.
A fog of worshipers, where shone the great,
Worms in to darken and to desecrate.
A troupe of crude farce actors tread the boards
Where trod the chiefs of the real battle hordes
Of the exploited, storming the forts of fate.
Thousands that in that day spoke boldly, find
Rash the straight word, imprudent the clear mind,
Undisciplined the will that states: *We can*.
Oh, what a quickly shifting ear is man!
Speak, if you have no deed; the truth is great.
They rot to earth who only stand and wait.

This Week Nature Lovers Will Be Mystics

"THE Outermost House"* by Henry Beston went out of its way to attract me. It describes minutely and pleasantly the observations of a sensitive person who possessed the imagination and fortitude to spend a full, round year on the Great Beach of Cape Cod living by himself in a small house built on the high dunes south of the Nauset Coast Guard Station. Twice I have walked that beach on the way from Provincetown around the Cape. I have come down reluctantly from the springy coast-guard path on the turf-covered cliffs above Nauset to drag through the sandy stretches to the south. I have bathed and basked and cooked on the beach. My nostrils still hold the acrid, solid smell of heavy quilts in a damp well-closed bedroom in the keeper's house at Nauset Light. The first chapters of Mr. Beston's book sent me off in search of charts and maps and diaries and photographs, and these sent me back to the book to compare notes and try

to identify wrecks and reestablish in my mind the geography of that stretch of the Cape Cod shore.

This was almost as much fun as a cross-word puzzle and created a friendly feeling toward Mr. Beston; for all I know I may have emptied the sand from my shoes on his front step. But as I read further in his book a disconcerting thing happened. I found myself disliking "The Outermost House." Perhaps this sort of feeling is bound to arise when someone tries to tell you all about something you have experienced intimately and intensely yourself. Whatever the reason, I began to rewrite Mr. Beston's book for him. Mentally I heckled him in a way he would properly resent if he knew about it. Must nature lovers, or amateur naturalists, always turn mystic? I inquired. Try as they will to achieve an air of bright objectivity, they seem inevitably to collapse into generalities about Nature. They look around them and report—nicely and accurately; and then they wander off into a hopeful, inventive discussion of the deeper meanings of things. The impulse that directs a flock of birds to fly in unison and symmetry, the desire that drives them to migrate over great stretches of sea to distant shores, the rhythm of waves that "beats in the sea like a pulse in living flesh," the passion that drives the alewives up into the ponds—such phenomena induce in our more verbal nature lovers a mood of reverential awe or hazardous speculation. A good naturalist occasionally emerges as a good mystic as well, but too few of the breed are willing to consider the primrose by the river's brim as even primarily a yellow primrose. This sort of tender-minded susceptibility is not a help to good reporting. If Mr. Beston had held himself to a straight story of life on the beach—as full as he wants to make it of human, ornithological, conchological, or botanical interest—my pleasure and interest would have lasted through the book. But he editorializes as he goes along. Evidently he never was a newspaper reporter, or perhaps he was a foreign correspondent. He editorializes, for instance, on the way of Nature with a man:

Dwelling thus upon the dunes, I lived in the midst of an abundance of natural life which manifested itself every hour of the day, and from being thus surrounded, thus inclosed within a great whirl of what one may call the life force, I felt that I drew a secret and sustaining energy. There were times, on the threshold of spring, when the force seemed as real as heat from the sun. A skeptic may smile and ask me to come to his laboratory and demonstrate; he may talk as he will of the secret workings of my own isolated and uninfluenced flesh and blood, but I think that those who have lived in nature, and tried to open their doors rather than close them on her energies, will understand well enough what I mean. Life is as much a force in the universe as electricity or gravitational pull, and the presence of life sustains life. Individuals may destroy individuals, but the life force may mingle with the individual life as a billow of fire may mingle for a moment with a candle flame.

Skeptic that I am, I would believe even more deeply in Mr. Beston's emotions if he left me to guess them from the quality of his writing and the intensity of his observation. He saves the day by continuing in the next line:

But now I must begin to tell of the birds who are wintering on the coast, of the exchange of species which takes place here, and of how all manage to live.

* Doubleday, Doran. \$3.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Beston sees his birds and his waves and even his human companions with an eye for significant detail. He knows the shore birds really well and his descriptions of their habits are clear and full of life. But even here he fails somehow to convey the delightful and comic mannerisms of the sandpiper tribes as they run and teeter and cock an inquiring eye; or to transmit the high-pitched conversational clatter that descends from a flock of wheeling terns. He should read, as no doubt he has read, the lively descriptions in Thoreau's "Cape Cod." There was a man who could walk a beach and tell his experiences without ever once being lured off the track by metaphysical whimsies. I finished "The Outermost House" with a final question lurking in my mind: Did its author ever act and feel or did he only look and wonder?

FREDA KIRCHWEY

The Battle for Food

Hunger Fighters. By Paul De Kruif. Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.

DE KRUIF'S chief virtue is that he knows how to give the quest of the scientist all the thrills and gaudiness of a fight with broadswords. In his chronicle there is no sign of the conventional man of learning, sober, somber, and a shade ridiculous. Instead there emerges a gallant and even a somewhat rakish fellow, warring magnificently against the recalcitrance of nature and no less against the hunkerousness of man. It was so in "Microbe Hunters," and it is so in the present book. Turn, for example, to the chapter on apthous fever, the dreadful foot-and-mouth disease. The hero here is Friedrich Loeffler, and he leaps out of the laboratory like some medieval swashbuckler, his eyes dancing, his armor flashing, and his mustaches "a pair of curved whiskbrooms." What was a mere name becomes a man. What was a solemn inquiry becomes a struggle to the death, and as exciting as any other.

De Kruif achieves this business with great skill. He enjoys fighting for its own sake, and he enjoys it especially when it is carried on against the churlish reticences of God. In his eye a Loeffler is far more than a shrewd fellow, wrestling with a hard problem; he is a rebel of the first caliber, a Davidsbündler pitted against the worst Philistine of them all. The tale is told nervously, uproariously, with immense gusto. It bulges through the ordinary decorums, and has recourse to phrases more vivid than suave. De Kruif, as they say, knows his onions, but he is surely no professor. He writes, when his blood is up, like a house afire, and what he writes makes gorgeous reading.

I have a feeling that, in "Hunger Fighters," his heroes interest him a shade less than they did in "Microbe Hunters." After all, bacteriology is his trade, and as a sworn adept he naturally rates its problems and exploits above those of the agronomist and the agricultural chemist. No doubt he is right. It is one thing to perfect a wheat that will stand frost, and quite another and more spectacular thing to do battle with microbes that slay whole populations. Thus Loeffler comes out rather better than the other heroes of this book. They have good lines, to be sure, but Loeffler is the star of the show, though he alone comes to complete defeat in the end. The organism that causes foot-and-mouth disease is still elusive; it creeps through the finest filters and baffles the most searching microscopes. But soon or late it will be tracked down, and when that time comes De Kruif will have another famous story to tell.

In "Hunger Fighters" he covers a wide range. He tells of Mark Alfred Carleton, who found the Kubanka wheat in Siberia and brought it to America; of Marion Dorset, who solved the mystery of hog cholera; of Angus Mackay, who developed the Marquis wheat; of Henry Wallace, the corn wizard, and of many another like them. The names are mainly unfamiliar.

These great enrichers of the nation are unknown, even to their direct beneficiaries. For one American farmer who has heard of Carleton or Dorset there are thousands who know and venerate Lydia Pinkham and Billy Sunday. The irony of it does not escape De Kruif. It tickles him to set forth the harsh obstacles and meager rewards of these incalculably useful and honorable men. He has made a good job of his book. Now let him do one on the surgeons.

H. L. MENCKEN

The Nonentity as Hero

Theresa. By Arthur Schnitzler. Simon and Schuster. \$2.50.

SCHNITZLER'S "Theresa," described on the jacket as its author's "first full-length novel in twenty years," is so competently written and yet withal so thoroughly undistinguished that its chief effect is to raise in the mind of the reader a question which would have been treason not so very many years ago. Accurately subtitled "The Chronicle of a Woman's Life," it recounts all the events in the existence of a singularly characterless female, and the question which it provokes is simply whether or not the modern novel has not already done somewhat more than justice to this particular subject. Flaubert seems to have discovered it in "Un Cœur Simple" and Maupassant helped to make it popular with "Une Vie," but every beginning realist since their day has felt constrained to prove that he could make an uninteresting person interesting, and by the time one has finished "The Old Wives' Tale" of Bennett one has begun to suspect that there is, after all, no reason why dull lives should be the only ones worth the attention of the serious artist.

There was, to be sure, a time when all of us read these chronicles with delight. Sensationally unsensational, they helped us to feel that we were getting into touch with "reality" and that we might trust their authors not to betray us with any false glamor. We championed them hotly as brave protests against a too facile romanticism, and we noted with pride our ability to become interested in tales so unvarnished. But their importance was too much the importance of a protest not to be, in part at least, temporary. Their unconventionality became gradually conventional and their dullness, ceasing to be in any way surprising, became merely dull. Other novelists—Somerset Maugham for instance—who were strictly within the same tradition of realism showed us how the same methods could be employed in the treatment of material intrinsically more interesting and, whatever we might think of the classic examples of the nonentity as hero, we felt no particular desire to follow his unadventurous adventures over again.

In "Theresa" the realistic form is pleasantly simplified. The story is told in a graceful narrative which adopts the straightforward directness of the *conte* rather than the elaborately dramatic method of the conventional realistic novel; but the story, though artfully recounted, remains essentially banal. We meet Theresa on the eve of her first amorous adventure, and we follow in detail her career as a governess, but her career does not seem to reveal anything except a certain listless incompetence in her own character. She is not particularly good or particularly bad. From the beginning to the end, her chief desire was to marry someone who would look after her, and yet, though she was never moved by any very intense passions, she persisted in sharing the bed with pretty nearly everyone who asked her. Since the affairs were quite casual with her there is nothing particularly surprising in the fact that they were always quite casual with her lovers also, and that she was left at the end of each one of them exactly where she was before. There was nothing except the desire for her favors likely to make any man willing to marry her, and it does not seem that any very remarkable shrewdness would have been necessary to make her realize that she could not reasonably expect to sell what she was so generous in giving away.

If it was Schnitzler's purpose to show that the repetitious

history of an almost completely negative person could be made readable he has succeeded, but the *tour de force* has been accomplished before and there is nothing except novelty which can make a *tour de force* interesting.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

French Art

Modern French Painters. By Maurice Raynal. Translated by Ralph Roeder. Brentano. \$7.50.

MRAYNAL'S book, "Modern French Painters," is one which automatically will have both an immediate and permanent interest, for it gives something of the lives, the beliefs, and usually the author's opinion, of fifty contemporary painters. To be sure its title is misleading, for it leaves out some of the best-known Frenchmen: Bonnard, Denis, Bernard, André, and even Matisse, and includes numbers of Italians, Spaniards, Poles, and Russians. He is said to have omitted Matisse because of the dislike he bears him or his work. This is a pity, for we should welcome a dissection of his painting which did not, as Coquiote's, concentrate on the painter's spectacles. We should be willing, too, to back Bonnard against Suzanne Roger or R. T. Bosshard. However, taking what we have, one cannot but admire the conscientious criticisms of most of the major names of the present day. The author writes, he says, "to inform and not to flatter." In weighing the candidates he has "added their aesthetic intentions to their technical qualities, preferring a groping and blundering art to that of imitators and diluters." Bravo!—except that, if one is to believe the author, here also good intentions tend to lead toward hell.

There is the case of Modigliani. "Attractive as he was himself," his art was "the result of direct emotion and a waste of sensory impulses due to an indolence too charming to be harshly censured." It "is characterized primarily by an appearance of childish mawkishness due no doubt to his morbid sensibility. . . ." "In point of execution his art was mannered, a little artificial, a little Botticelliesque, but charming." The key to the situation seems to be that his interest in plastic meditations could only be gathered from his conversation. For, while M. Raynal succeeds in admiring those artists, such as Soutine, Kisling, Marie Laurencin, who respond incorrigibly to their feelings, his marked favorites are aestheticians such as Picasso, Juan Gris, Metzinger, and Gleizes: even those who, like Derain and Utrillo, are so unconsciously. He enjoys Derain's spontaneity, his sensuous color, his romantic conception of human forms, but the secret is that

Derain leaps from the second to the fourth dimension, that is to say, his sensibility refuses to be caged in any but the simplest formulas: it claims the right to exist in a space uncircumscribed as yet by mathematics, in a space which Euclid has not yet darkened by undemonstrable postulates.

Similarly the admirable thing about Juan Gris is his use of a metaphor that is purely plastic, so that "since in the figure of rhetoric the *arms* of a man become those of a windmill, in the picture the lines of a music staff may equally well become the strings of a guitar." Of course, figures of speech vary in quality, and M. Raynal recognizes this, not being persuaded by an artist's excellent theory to like his poor work, and not, as far as is human, disliking good work because of what he considers poor philosophy.

It is difficult, though, to admire either the philosophy or the achievement shown in the arrangement of the book. It commences with a pea-green binding of linen, continues with binding papers of flat mourning black, is interrupted by an elaborate, though not unsuccessful, title-page in the modern manner, and continues through 164 pages of styleless printing enlivened with piquant misprints. The translation reads excellently, and the illustrations are good.

WALTER GUTMAN

Santo Domingo and the American Empire

Naboth's Vineyard: The Dominican Republic, 1844-1924. By Sumner Welles. Payson and Clarke. Two volumes. \$7.50.

THE figure of Naboth, murdered for his vineyard, was applied to Santo Domingo by Charles Sumner, in a speech before the United States Senate in December, 1870. Sumner Welles, "Sometime Chief of the Latin-American Division of the Department of State of the United States and American Commissioner to the Dominican Republic from 1922 to 1925," now borrows the title of that speech for a narrative history in two large volumes. To Sumner, military intervention was a "dance of blood." To Welles it is a "costly mistake." There is a difference.

Except for the fine chapter on the Grant annexation project, the first volume might have remained in the inkpot without intolerable loss to anybody. Senator Sumner cannot be vindicated too often. Time, patriotism, and the military prestige of General Grant tend to erase from memory the fact that he was the dupe of concession-hunters like "General" Cazneau and "Colonel" Fabens in a flagrant violation of international law, accompanied, as Sumner pointed out at the time, by usurpation of war powers in peace time by the President of the United States. Judge Schoenrich's excellent history of Santo Domingo is weak at this one point, showing too much reliance on the 1871 report of Grant's "roving band of commissioners," as a contemporary critic dubbed them. Any lack of emphasis on American-Dominican relations in the early part of Judge Schoenrich's account has already been extremely well covered by Dr. Mary Treudley's study, "The United States and Santo Domingo—1789-1866," of the existence of which Mr. Welles does not seem to be aware. The period from 1871 to the first American customs receivership in 1905 is amply treated by Schoenrich, who knew the literature intimately as one of the attorneys in the Santo Domingo Improvement Company arbitration. Contrary to Mr. Welles's confident belief, his bibliography is quite incomplete, as may be ascertained by a glance at Miss Treudley's. By letting well enough alone, he could have cut the bulk of his work in half and greatly improved its chances of being read.

For the period 1905-1916, Mr. Welles adds to the detail of Judge Schoenrich's narrative with materials from "the archives of the Department of State." Absence of specific references would make an itemized check difficult, but the reviewer has not been able to note anything of importance not already published in the printed volumes of Foreign Relations. It is curious that an ex-diplomat who has lived in the country should not have made use of the *Official Gazette* (*Gaceta Oficial*) of the Dominican Republic, or of the annual reports of the Customs Receivership since 1905. The obvious explanation is that he is mainly interested in political, diplomatic, and military history. Aside from some secondary works in Spanish (among which Max Henriquez Ureña's "Los Estados Unidos y la República Dominicana" is only one of those conspicuously absent) he has, by his own admission, relied mainly on statements from Dominicans who took part in the controversial events for the Dominican side of the question. This is certainly not the most accurate or least prejudiced type of source.

With 743 pages of his space gone, the author gets at last to the period of the American intervention of 1916-1924, concerning which he has first-hand knowledge. After all, it is in Mr. Welles as candid ex-diplomat that our interest centers, not in Mr. Welles as amateur historian. With only 155 pages for his real story, he is cramped for space. Military "justice" for civilians is barely referred to, the name of Fabio Fiallo, the jailed poet, not even appearing in the index. There were, it is admitted, "scattered cases of injustice or maltreatment of civilians in the northern, central, and southern provinces," and "many

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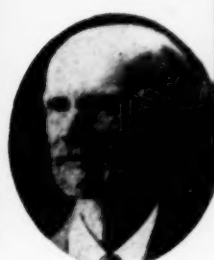
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atrocities were undoubtedly committed" in the eastern provinces. Were it not for this single admission, the general effect of judicial remarks about the unreliability of witnesses might be mistaken for praising with faint damnation. Even one case of wanton killing is none the less murder. Something might be added to the oft-repeated statement that the one officer against whom "many of the most revolting acts of barbarism" were charged "committed suicide before his trial." This officer happened to hold the rank of captain, and was not one of the minor figures out in the brush of the back country. Exactly what were his orders, oral and otherwise, we have no means of knowing. His arrest and death have been shrouded in vague generalities, and the suicide welcomed as an admission of personal guilt which somehow cleansed the others of sin.

"Naboth's Vineyard" is a conventional political, military, and diplomatic history, faulty in technique but strewn with important facts. Its viewpoint is liberal on the whole. It is lucidly written, by a man of intelligence, one who apparently puts down his actual views, pro or con, with perfect candor. He condemns the military government as a costly mistake. We need not share his enthusiasm for the utterances of Charles Evans Hughes as a new and faultless decalogue of Latin-American policy or his optimism about commercial cooperation as a road to real good feeling in order to credit his sincerity. It remains a fact that Americans exploit many thousands of acres more land in the Dominican Republic than they did in 1916. America has the lion's share of the import trade of Santo Domingo, without taking her export sugar, as was formerly the case. What that country needs from us is the removal of some rather subtle economic inequalities. She is not economically self-sustaining, and cannot even retaliate against the injuries inflicted by our tariff wall without hurting herself more than she does us. That these small nations cannot protect themselves against a dangerous amount of alien landholding, or against the ill effects upon the working classes of the importation of cheap labor by foreign concerns, is a fact which no candid observer can fail to recognize.

M. M. KNIGHT

Books in Brief

When It's Cocktail Time in Cuba. By Basil Woon. Horace Liveright. \$2.50.

A lively and informed Baedeker to Cuba written to please readers of the *New Yorker*.

Quaker Adventures. By Edward Thomas. Fleming H. Revell Company. \$2.

Peace is not dull for the Quakers. In war or in peace their young men and women have solved William James's puzzle of the moral equivalent of war. Wherever life is harsh and exciting and bitter, young Quakers find their way. In France they built houses just behind the guns; in Germany they fed children between revolutions; in Russia they served tea to bandits and bought horses in Samarkand and removed cataracts from Moslem eyes; in Ireland they faced both British and Sinn Fein guns; in Serbia a young Quaker, unarmed, drove his supplies through bandit country with such good cheer that the bandits gave him an escort; in America they teach Indians and set up soup kitchens in the strike counties of Pennsylvania. Edward Thomas believes that "scientific security," individual and international, requires that men go unarmed, and that one reason the world does not agree with him is that such stories as these Quakers can tell are not retold as adventure stories and because "editors fail to publish them, doubting if they will interest people." So he piloted a score of Quaker adventurers to a radio station to tell their tales; this book is a collection of their stories. They are uneven; some of them would naturally find their way to editorial scrap-baskets; others belong on the front page of history.

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Hafiz, the Tongue of the Hidden. By Clarence K. Streit. The Viking Press. \$2.

Hafiz has often been attempted in English, most of the time without pleasing result. Either the translator has undertaken the impossible task of rendering the ghazals literally, in which case they become unreadable, or he has taken such liberties with the great Persian as to leave him no longer Persian. Mr. Streit follows Cranmer-Byng in the use of quatrains, and achieves a considerable success. But the ampler versions of Gertrude Bell and Richard Le Gallienne are still the most interesting we have.

Politicians and Moralists of the Nineteenth Century. By Emile Faguet. Translated from the French by Dorothy Galton. Little, Brown and Company. \$4.50.

A real service to letters has been rendered by the translator in making available to English readers the third volume of Faguet's brilliant series, first published in France some thirty years ago. The word "politicians" is not to be understood in its derogatory American sense; the politicians and moralists studied in this volume are Stendhal, Tocqueville, Proudhon, Sainte-Beuve, Taine, and Renan. Faguet is chiefly occupied with an exposition of these men's leading ideas, which reflect the hopes and fears of the nineteenth century. Here is a commentator more lucid than his originals. He meets the test of the great critic: when he has done, he has made it almost superfluous to read the works of his subjects. The writing constantly sparkles with epigram. Suspicious of strongly marked general ideas for himself, Faguet displayed an almost infinite receptivity for the ideas of others, and this was the secret of his success as a critic. As far as he chose to go, he overlooked little. But his interest in ideas was so intense that he does not give us portraits of personalities which exist vividly in the flesh. He adhered to the principles of a facultative psychology which made him see very clearly a subject's leading characteristics without tempting him to consider their causes, or combine them into a dynamic whole.

Chinese-Japanese Mythology. By John C. Ferguson and Masaharu Anesaki. Boston: Marshall Jones Company. \$10.

East and West are meeting as never before, and a century hence Chinese folk-lore may become almost as intimate a part of American tradition as the Greek stories which, geographically and emotionally remote as they are, yet form part of every schoolboy's cultural heritage. Mr. Ferguson and Mr. Anesaki attempt to supply the need for a summary of the myths and folk-stories without an understanding of which Oriental painting is mere lines and Oriental stories mere words. The rich illustrations double the value of the text.

From Serfdom to Bolshevism. The Memoirs of Baron N. Wrangel. J. B. Lippincott and Company. \$4.

The author of these reminiscences of seventy-three years of Russian history (1847 to 1920) was the father of the better-known Baron Wrangel who led an army against the Bolsheviks in 1919-1920 and who still heads a band of mercenaries in the Balkans. Except when he writes of the Kerensky and Communist revolutions the old noble has a sense of humor, an urbanity, a cynicism which are winning even when you hate his views. A reactionary of the first water, he can nevertheless mock the Czars whom he meets in society and scoff at the weakness of the ruling class of "we's." He despises the rising "bourgeoisie" of the second half of the nineteenth century, and sneers at the "intelligentsia" which to him includes everybody from Miliukov to Lenin. His sidelights on the life of the landed nobles, the serfs, the civil service, the army, the corruption of the Romanoff regime, Count Witte, the Jewish banker Rothstein, and a few other prominent Russians are interesting though fragmentary. Written by a rheumatic man past seventy, these memoirs are a real performance; but they are of little real value to the general reader.



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Drama

Melpomene on a Soap-Box

"GODS OF THE LIGHTNING," the long-promised drama based upon the Sacco-Vanzetti case, has arrived at the Little Theater. Maxwell Anderson and Harold Hickerson, authors of the piece, have wisely chosen an imaginary analogue rather than the case itself and, thanks, in part, to the freedom which is thus permitted them, they have written one of the most effective dramas of social protest which it has ever been my privilege to see.

In one sense, "Gods of the Lightning" is straight propaganda. Written out of an intense conviction, it never for a moment forgets that it has a purpose, and it hammers unceasingly at the point which it wishes to enforce; but it is too vigorous and too vivid to suffer from this fact as other propaganda plays seem almost inevitably to do. Rapid, relentless, and flaming, it takes hold upon the audience from the moment the curtain rises, and it carries the spectator up a long crescendo of excited indignation which leaves him, not purged by the catharsis of art, but still raging with that as yet undischarged anger which it is the business of the propagandist to create. Doubtless there have been before this plays upon controversial subjects which were more judicial and more mellow—certainly "Gods of the Lightning" makes no effort to suggest either of these qualities—but I can think of none more likely to accomplish what this one sets out to achieve, which is, I take it, to work upon the passions of the audience and to transform placid citizens into active radicals.

Much of the effectiveness of the play must be due, of course, to the practiced skill of Mr. Anderson and to his gift for writing dialogue at once forceful and convincing. But this effectiveness was made possible by the choice of a fundamental design which reveals on the part of one or both of the authors a surer sense of just what the propaganda play can accomplish than is usual with those who attempt to make a forum out of the stage. Mere argument, reasoned and logical, is never effective in any fictional form; since nothing can be really proved by events which the author is at liberty to invent or by the analysis of motives which he is at liberty to attribute exactly as he sees fit. Hence the play with a purpose is analogous, not to the debate, but to the oration, and it is according to the principles of oratory rather than the principles of argument that it must be constructed. Any coolly reasoned conclusions which it attempts to draw are invalidated by the fact that the data upon which they are based were invented for the very purpose, and any pretense of disinterested logic is obviously a fraud; but none of these facts is of any importance where polemic, whose purpose is not to convince by argument but to transform conviction into passionate protest, is concerned. Though Melpomene is a sorry advocate when she chooses mere argument as her weapon, she can become on occasion a magnificent agitator, and it is that which Messrs. Anderson and Hickerson have made of her. Assuming that their two analogues of Sacco and Vanzetti were innocent victims of a conservative conspiracy and assuming that this conspiracy was coldly aware of itself, they have set forward these dreadful facts with a passionate eloquence which never falters. Fiery invective alternates with bitter irony and melodramatic excitement with scathing satire.

The district attorney does his ugly job. A savagely caricatured judge pronounces his sentence. And from the dock the prisoners utter their defiance. Nothing has been omitted which could prepare the audience to receive with pleasure the most violent expression of the most subversive opinions, and these expressions are not minced. The manacled victims, speaking in character, say things which few, speaking in *propria persona*,

would dare to say publicly, and the effect of their daring is like that achieved by an orator who has brought his audience to the point where they are crying for vengeance. In the seat beside me two highly respectable ladies who had come armed with notebooks trembled visibly and not without reason; for it is doubtful if the American theater has ever seen an attack upon respectable American institutions more dynamically effective than this, and certainly most attempts to do similar things must seem, when put beside it, academically anemic. "Gods of the Lightning" does not belong to the "theater of ideas"; it is not, like the plays of Ibsen or of Shaw, addressed primarily to the professional intellectual; but it might, on the other hand, find a place alongside of certain great speeches in the library of the revolutionist. As it is now, well acted and well produced at the Little Theater, it gives the theatergoer a kind of thrill that he has not often experienced and is not likely to find elsewhere.

"Girl Trouble" (Belmont Theater) is a mild comedy about a young man who (pardon the mixed metaphor) kicked over his mother's apron-strings. It did not impress me greatly. "Americana" (Lew Field's Theater) is the new edition of Mr. McEvoy's revue. It makes commendable efforts to be different and, as a result no doubt of those efforts, it is very spotty. Rosamond Johnson and Taylor Gordon, accompanied by a double quartet of Negro singers, contribute some good singing.

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A. W.

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International Relations Section

The Color Line in South Africa

By RUTH ALEXANDER

Cape Town, September 1

THE group of bills which in the near future will determine the political future of the non-European elements of the population of South Africa are at present awaiting the further taking of evidence by the committee appointed last year for the purpose. The more or less tentative drafts of these measures, which were laid on the table of the House of Assembly during the last session, have been somewhat nervously discussed in public by members or prospective members of Parliament who find it difficult to forget that there will be a general election next year.

Meanwhile, a reading of the bills in their present form is sufficiently depressing to those who do not think of the population of South Africa solely in terms of the million and a half of whites who at present control and exploit the five and a half million Indians, natives, and colored people [the term "colored" is used here in the South African sense, i.e., natives with some more or less remote admixture of white blood]. A policy at its best aggressively paternal, at its worst severely repressive, is outlined in the measures dealing specifically with the native peoples. The Asiatics, or Indians and Chinese, are apparently to look for no alleviation of their existing disabilities, since they are not mentioned at all in these bills. But the half a million colored people, who in the Cape Province actually form the deciding factor in certain constituencies, and who include by far the greater part of the educated and literate element among the non-European population, are to be accorded certain new franchise privileges which, illusory in so far as any real addition to their political power is concerned, will yet, if actually carried into effect, have far-reaching results.

The measure has indeed been framed with great astuteness, to crystallize into legislation the deliberate policy of the Nationalists, a policy which, characteristically, suits both their sense of what is godly and their sense of what is shrewd. They feel that they cannot evade a moral responsibility for these people, who, if all white men had been both wise and continent, would never have come into being. They are doing their best, by legislation which makes it a punishable offense for a white person to have irregular sexual relations with a native, to insure that there shall be no large fresh additions to the race from without since marriages of white and native persons in South Africa are naturally very rare. The rapid increase from within would be a matter of greater concern to them if it were not kept in check by a very high infant mortality rate and the heavy incidence of tuberculosis and venereal disease. But they feel that a policy of political if not of social absorption would at once satisfy their own consciences and give the colored people a gratifying assurance of special treatment.

The anti-native feeling among the colored people is as strong, above that lowest level of poverty at which all prejudices are swamped in a helpless common misery, as is the anti-color feeling among the white people, the "Europeans."

Colored servants will not work in the same kitchen or eat at the same table as a native servant, though the native may be the cleaner and healthier of the two. A colored girl who allowed a native to make love to her would lose caste among her friends. But their common disabilities have hitherto drawn the better educated among them together for mutual support and mutual improvement. Thus the teachers of both stocks have met and conferred, and at Lovedale, which is primarily a college for natives, most of the few colored youths who have managed, by heroic efforts, to pass the boundaries of primary education, have obtained their secondary education. And since in the Cape both natives and colored people enjoyed the same franchise privileges as the whites but were barred on precisely the same terms from entering Parliament, while in the other three provinces the same blank negation held both from even exercising a vote, it was natural for them at election times, or at any moment of political crisis, to make each other's cause their own. Further, in the Cape natives and colored people were not debarred from becoming members of the Town Council or the Provincial Council, so that at these elections also they were accustomed to uphold each other.

The Nationalists are rapidly changing all this. Despite the uncompromising dictum of the old republican constitution that there shall be "no equality between black and white in church or state," branches of "the African Bond," that is to say the colored section of the Nationalist Party—the Northern Nationalists would never tolerate colored branches of the same name as their own—are being opened and financed in the big towns of the Cape Province, where alone of the four provinces colored and natives vote on the same basis as the whites. The qualifications are the ability to write their names, addresses, and occupations on the registration form, and either the owning or occupying of property worth £75 a year, or the earning of at least £50 annually. Of these requirements the natives and colored people, for whom there is no compulsory schooling, as there is for the whites, and a great dearth of schools of any sort, find the first the hardest to comply with, so that a few weeks before election time little classes are wont to spring up mysteriously all over certain constituencies to help out the free and independent electors in this respect. At the meetings of the Bond branches the listeners are exhorted by white speakers to support the Government, which intends to raise their status and treat them on a political footing similar to that of the whites, with whom they must accordingly combine to drive the natives back to the regions whence they came, and to which they really belong. This appeal both to interest and to the vanity of the half-caste has proved extremely popular.

If this propaganda succeeds, how will it affect the evolution and even the survival of the colored people as a separate race? Is it likely or possible that they will so survive? Outside of the Cape Province their numbers are small as compared with the white population, negligible as compared with the natives. The poorer and larger part of the colored people, like the poor everywhere, are of inferior physique and have little stamina. They are riddled with tuberculosis and venereal disease. Their mode of life and such culture as they do possess are not native to themselves, but imitative of Dutch or English or American life and culture, according to their locality and to the tradition of their own particular

mission school to which most of them are still indebted almost entirely for education and for recreation. They attend the mission school, and find in the mission prayer-meetings, bazaars, concerts, and tea-meetings comforting substitutes for the concerts they may not go to, the plays they may only scan from the gallery, the cafes into which they dare not, even though the management allowed them, walk and sit down to their meal, for fear of the insults of Nordic tea-drinkers. The government schools for the colored people bear no relations to their numbers. The mission schools are unhealthily overcrowded and thousands of colored children grow up with no schooling at all. The bulk of those who do attend school receive a primary education only.

Hence it comes about that the few American Negroes who have found their way here become naturally, by virtue of their superior knowledge and by an aura about them of freedom and of the initiative born of freedom, the natural leaders of the colored people, wherever they have in any measure emancipated themselves from the direct tutelage of church or mission school. They have as yet neither songs nor legends of their own; the language they speak is that spoken by the Europeans to whom they are kin by blood, but among whom they live as in a glass-walled prison, seeing, hearing, but never coming into contact. The colored people of South Africa, if they do survive as a separate section, will, so far as present indications serve to show, only do so as a sort of overseas province, culturally speaking, of Harlem, New York, and a province of which that enormous and varied community would have no reason to feel particularly proud. For what independent and self-respecting development can there be for a people who are teaching themselves to deny the blood of one of the two races from which they are sprung, while the other has long since cast them off?

And what is to be their reward for this humiliating and suicidal betrayal? The Nationalists have, to do them justice, never pretended that any measure of social or economic equality was intended as part of their scheme for the raising of the status of the colored people. What they do propose, when it comes to facts, is an electoral amelioration, marking off the colored man for all from the native. They propose to take away from the native of the Cape Colony the vote which he has hitherto enjoyed on the same terms as both colored and white, and to substitute for it Native Councils with severely restricted powers and a comprehensive supervision by the Native Affairs Department for local government, and a quota of seven European members in Parliament. The vote of the Cape colored people, on the other hand, is to be left untouched. In addition to this, it is proposed to bestow on a male population which in 1926 totalled over 31,000 for the three remaining provinces of the Union, all of whom now possess no vote, one European member of ordinary powers in the House of Assembly. (It is laid down in the Act of Union that all members of Parliament must be of European descent.) It is true that the bill as drafted provides that at any time after seven years from the passing of the Colored Persons' Rights Bill both Houses of Parliament may, if they choose, place these thirty thousand and more voters on the ordinary voters' rolls of their districts, in which case their one member will of course disappear, and their political status seem altogether equal to that of the whites. But this would imply, for the Transvaal and the Free State, which retain their original franchise basis, adult male suffrage for col-

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ored men as well as white, a state of things utterly unacceptable to the whites of the North. It need only be pointed out at the moment that as the average constituency of the country is about three thousand, the provision of one member for the whole of the colored population outside the Cape Province can hardly be said to err on the side of generosity.

But even to be placed on the register that will entitle him to this fairly slender amount of representation, the colored man will have to prove to the satisfaction of a special board to be appointed for the purpose that he is really a colored man and not a native. Any person born prior to the gazettement of the Colored Persons' Rights Bill who has one native and one colored or European parent may be classed as a colored person provided that the Board decides after inquiry "That such person is, from his language, associates, and standard or habits of living more closely akin to a colored person than a native." But if he be born subsequent to the passing of this act he can only by a special resolution of both Houses of Parliament be declared a colored person. The native, at present, may not purchase intoxicating liquor, and may not buy land outside certain areas. Since, for purposes of the revised franchise, a complete register is to be made and kept of both colored and native men, it seems reasonable to suppose that the same register will be used for all general purposes. Who the incorruptible and learned folk are who are to make the decisions that will be so momentous to thousands of their fellow-men and how they are to be selected is not announced.

The division, already deep and tragic, in many colored families where cross-strains have produced children of the same parents who are yet widely different in appearance, will under the proposed Colored Persons' Rights Bill, be most cruelly emphasized. It is impossible that such drastic differentiation, with its far-reaching consequences, should not further increase the disharmony among the colored people, while in its administration cruel injustices will be inevitable, and creeping corruption all but inevitable. The mere passing of such a measure will effectively alienate the colored people from the natives, and split them up into mutually hostile groups among themselves. From a people so weakened there can be for many a long day little to fear. Is it impossible that some idea of this sort has occurred to the gentlemen responsible for the framing of the Colored Persons' Rights Bill?

Contributors to This Issue

MERRYLE STANLEY RUKEYSER, formerly financial and business editor of the New York Tribune and the New York Evening Journal, is the author of "The Common Sense of Money and Investments" and "Financial Advice to a Young Man."

ALBERT RHYS WILLIAMS, the author of "The Russian Land," has spent many years in Russia.

DUFF GILFOND is a Washington newspaperwoman.

WITTER BYNNER is author of many volumes of poetry.

MAX EASTMAN, American poet and critic, is the author, among other volumes, of "Leon Trotzky."

H. L. MENCKEN is editor of the American Mercury and a contributing editor of The Nation.

WALTER GUTMAN contributes frequently to The Nation.

M. M. KNIGHT is associate professor of economic history at the University of California.

RUTH S. ALEXANDER writes for The Nation from South Africa.

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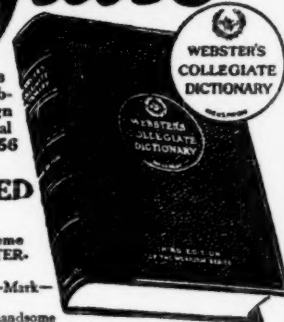
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